

MORAL TALES,

BY

M. MARMONTEL.

VOLUME THE SECOND.



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MORAL TALES.



THE BAD MOTHER.

AMONG the monstrous productions of nature, we may reckon the heart of a mother who loves one of her children to the exclusion of all the rest. I do not mean an enlightened tenderness, which distinguishes among the young plants which it cultivates, that which yields the best returns to its first cares : I speak of a blind fondness, frequently exclusive, sometimes jealous, which picks out an idol and victims amid the little innocents brought into the world, and for whom we are equally bound to soften the burthen of life. It is of this error, so common and so shameful to human nature, that I am going to give an example.

Vol. II.

A

In

In one of our maritime provinces, an intendant, who had rendered himself respectable by his severity in repressing grievances of all sorts, making it a principle to favour the weak, and controul the strong; this virtuous man, named M. de Carandon, died poor, and almost insolvent. He had left behind him a daughter, whom no body married, because she had much pride, little beauty, and no fortune. A rich and honest merchant sought her, out of respect to the memory of her father. "He has done us so many good offices," said the worthy Corée, (this was the merchant's name) "it is but just that some of us should repay them to the daughter." Corée offered himself then in an humble manner, and Mademoiselle Carandon, with a great deal of reluctance, consented to give him her hand, on condition that she should have in his house an absolute authority. The good man's respect for the memory of the father extended even to the daughter: he consulted her as his oracle; and if at any time he happened to be of a different opinion from her, she had nothing to do but to utter these silencing expressions, "The late M. de Carandon, my father . . ." Corée never waited for her to finish, before he confessed himself in the wrong.

He died pretty young, and left her two children, of which she had been pleased to permit

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permit him to be the father. On his death-bed he thought it his duty to regulate the partition of his effects; but M. de Carandon held it, as she told him, for a maxim, that in order to retain children under the dependence of a mother, it was necessary to render her the dispenser of the effects intended for them. This law was the rule of Corée's will; and his inheritance was left in the hands of his wife, with the fatal right of distributing it to her children as she should think proper. Of these two children the eldest was her delight; not that he was handsomer, or of a more happy disposition, than the younger, but she had ran some danger of her life in bringing him into the world: he had first made her experience the pains and joy of child bed; he had possessed himself of her tenderness, which he also seemed to have exhausted; she had, in short, all the bad reasons that a bad mother could have for loving him only.

Little Jemmy was the child rejected: his mother hardly vouchsafed to see him, and never spoke to him but to chide him. The poor child, intimidated, durst not look up before her, nor answer her without trembling. He had, she said, his father's disposition, a vulgar soul, and what is called the air of such folks.

THE BAD MOTHER,

For the eldest, whom she had taken care to render as headstrong, as disobedient, as humourfome as possible, he was gentility itself : his obstinacy was called greatness of spirit; his humours, excess of sensibility. She was delighted to see that he would never give up a point when he was in the right; and you must know that he was never in the wrong. She never ceased saying that he knew his own good, and that he had the honour of resembling the sweet madam his mamma. This eldest boy, who was styled M. de l'Etang, (for it was not thought right to leave him the name of Corée) this eldest, I say, had masters of all sorts : the lessons they set were for him alone, but little Jemmy reaped the fruit of them; in so much, that at the end of a few years Jemmy knew all that they had taught M. de l'Etang, who in return knew nothing.

The good women, who make a practice of attributing to children all the little wit they have themselves, and who ruminate all morning on the pretty things they are to say in the day; the good women had made the mother, whose weakness they were well acquainted with, believe that her eldest son was a prodigy. The masters, less complaisant, or less artful, while they complained of the indocility and inattention of this favourite, were boundless in their encomiums on Jemmy : they did not
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absolutely say that M. de l'Etang was a block-head, but they said that little Jemmy had the genius of an angel. The mother's vanity was wounded ; and out of an injustice, which one would not believe existed in nature, if this vice of mothers were less in fashion, she redoubled her aversion to the little wretch, became jealous of his improvement, and resolved to take away from her spoiled child the humiliation of a comparison.

A very affecting adventure awakened, however, in her the sentiments of nature ; but this retort upon herself only humbled, without correcting her. Jemmy was ten years of age, M. de l'Etang near fifteen, when she fell dangerously ill. The eldest employed himself about his pleasures, and very little about his mother's health. It is the punishment of foolish mothers to love unnatural children. However, she began to grow uneasy ; Jemmy perceived it, and immediately his little heart was seized with grief and fear : the impatience to see his mother grew too strong for him to conceal it longer. They had accustomed him never to appear but when he was called ; but at last his tenderness gave him courage. He seizes the instant when the chamber-door was half open, entered without noise and with trembling steps, and approached his mother's bed. " Is it you, my son ?" said she.—

A 3

" No,

"No, mamma, it is Jemmy." This natural and overwhelming answer penetrated with shame and grief the soul of this unjust woman; but a few caresses from her bad son soon restored him to his full ascendancy; and Jemmy, in the end, was neither the better beloved, nor reckoned the more worthy to be so.

Scarce was Madam Corée recovered, when she resumed the design of banishing him her house: her pretence was, that M. de l'Etang, being naturally lively, was too susceptible of dissipation to have a companion in his studies; and the impertinent prepossessions of the masters for the child, who was the most humble and fawning with them, might easily discourage him, whose spirit being higher, and less tractable, required more management: it was her pleasure, therefore, that l'Etang should be the only object of their cares, and she got rid of the unfortunate Jemmy by exiling him to a college.

At sixteen l'Etang quitted his masters in the mathematics, physics, music, &c. just as he had taken them; he began his exercises, which he performed much in the same manner as he had done his studies; and at twenty he appeared in the world with the self-sufficiency of a coxcomb, who has heard of every thing, but reflected on nothing.

Jemmy,

Jemmy, on his part, had gone through his studies ; and his mother was quite wearied with the commendations they gave him. " Well then," said she, " since he is so wise, " he will succeed in the church ; he has nothing to do but to take to that course of " life."

Unfortunately Jemmy had no inclination for the ecclesiastic state ; he came therefore to entreat his mother to dispense with his entering into it. " You imagine then," said she to him with a cold and severe air, " that I " have wherewith to maintain you in the " world ? I assure you I have not. Your father's fortune was not so considerable as " was imagined ; it will scarce be sufficient to " settle your elder brother. For you, Sir, " you have only to consider whether you will " run the career of benefices or of arms, whether you will have your head shaven or " broken ; in short, whether you will take a " band or a lieutenancy of infantry : this is " all that I can do for you." Jemmy answered her with respect, that there were less violent courses to be taken by the son of a merchant. At these words Madam de Carandon was near dying with grief for having brought into the world a son so little worthy of her, and forbid him her sight. Young Corée, distressed at having incurred his mother's

ther's anger, retired sighing, and resolved to try whether fortune would be less cruel to him than nature. He learnt that a vessel was on the point of sailing for the Antilles, whither he had a design of repairing. He writ to his mother to ask her consent, her blessing, and a parcel of goods. The two first articles were amply granted him, but the latter sparingly.

His mother, too happy in being rid of him, wanted to see him before his departure, and, while she embraced him, bestowed on him a few tears. His brother also had the goodness to wish him a good voyage. These were the first caresses he had ever received from his relations; his sensible heart was penetrated with them: yet he durst not ask them to write to him; but he had a fellow-collegian, by whom he was tenderly beloved: he conjured him at parting now and then to send him news of his mother.

She was now no longer employed but in the care of settling her favourite son. He declared for the robe: they obtained him a dispensation from its studies; and he was soon admitted into the sanctuary of the laws. Nothing remained wanting but an advantageous marriage; they proposed a rich heiress; but they required of the widow the settlement of her fortune. She had the weakness to consent to it, scarce reserving to herself wherewith to live

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live decently ; well assured that her son's fortune would be always at her disposal.

At the age of twenty-five, M. de l'Etang found himself a dapper little counsellor, neglecting his wife as much as his mother, taking great care of his own person, and paying very little regard to the affairs of the bar. As it was genteel for a husband to have some body besides his wife, l'Etang thought it his duty to set up for a man of intrigue. A young girl, whom he ogled at the play, returned his invitations, received him at her lodgings with a great deal of politeness, told him he was charming, which he very readily believed, and in a short time rid him of a pocket-book with ten thousand crowns. But as there is no such thing as eternal love, this perjured beauty quitted him at the expiration of three months for a young English lord, equally foolish and more magnificent. L'Etang, who could not conceive how they could dismiss such a person as himself, resolved to avenge himself by taking a mistress still more famous, and loading her with favours. His new conquest raised him a thousand rivals ; and when he compared himself with the crowd of adorers who sighed for her in vain, he had the pleasure of thinking himself more amiable, as he found himself more happy. However, having perceived that he was not without uneasiness, she was desirous

firous of convincing him, that there was nothing in the world which she was not resolved to quit for him, and proposed, for the sake of avoiding impertinents, that they should go together to Paris to forget all the world, and live only for each other. L'Etang was transported at this mark of tenderness. Every thing is got ready for the journey; they set out, they arrive, and chuse their retreat in the neighbourhood of the Palais Royal. Fatima (that was the name of this beauty) asked and obtained, without difficulty, a coach to take the air. L'Etang was surpris'd at the number of friends that he found in this good city. These friends had never seen him; but his merit attracted them in crowds. Fatima herself received none but L'Etang's company, and he was always very sure of his friends and of her. This charming woman had, however, one weakness: she believed in dreams. One night she had had one which could not, she said, be effaced from her memory. L'Etang wanted to know what this dream was which took up her attention so seriously. "I dreamed," said she, "that I was in a delicious apartment. In it was a damask bed of three different colours, with tapestry and sofas suited to this superb bed; pannels dazzling with gold, polished cabinets, porcelaine of Japan, China monkies, the prettiest in the world;

“ world ; but all this was nothing. A toilette
“ was ready set out, I drew near it ; what
“ did I see ? My heart beats at it : a diamond
“ screen ; and then what diamonds ! the most
“ beautiful shaped aigrette, the finest ear-
“ rings, the handsomest esclavage, and a river
“ without end. Yes, Sir, I will tell you :
“ something very extraordinary will happen
“ to me. This dream has affected me very
“ strongly, and my dreams never deceive
“ me.”

It was in vain that M. de l'Etang employed all his eloquence to persuade her that dreams signified nothing ; she maintained that this dream did signify something, and, at length, he feared lest some of his rivals should propose to realise it. He was under a necessity therefore of capitulating, and except in some few circumstances, resolved to accomplish it himself. We may easily judge, that this experiment did not cure her of the habit of dreaming : she took a delight in it, and dreamed so often, that even the fortune of good Mr. Corée became hardly any thing more than a dream. M. de l'Etang's young wife, to whom this journey had not been very agreeable, demanded to be separated from the fortunes of a husband, who abandoned her ; and her portion, which he was obliged to restore, put him still less at his ease.

Play

Play is a resource. L'Etang pretended to excel at piquet ; his friends who made up a common purse, betted all for him, while one of them played against him. Every time that he threw out, " Faith," said one of the betters, " that is well played !" " There is no playing better," said another. In short, M. de l'Etang played the best in the world ; but he never had the aces. While they stripped him insensibly, the faithful Fatima, who perceived his decline, dreamed one night that she quitted him, and left him the next day : however, as it is mortifying to fall off from one's grandeur, he piqued himself upon his honour, and would not abate any thing of his pride, so that in a few years he found he was ruined.

He was now at his last shifts, when the good lady his mother, who had not managed her own reserve better, writ to him desiring some money. He returned her answer, that he was very sorry ; but that, far from being able to send her any relief, he stood in need of it himself. The alarm was already spread among their creditors, and the question was, who should first seize the ruins of their fortune. " What have I done !" said the distracted mother ; " I have stripped myself of all for a son who has squandered every thing."

In the mean time what became of the unfortunate Jemmy ? Jemmy, with a good understanding,

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standing, the best heart, the handsomest figure in the world, and his little venture, was happily arrived at St. Domingo. It is well known how easy a Frenchman of good morals, and a good person, finds it to establish himself in the isles. The name of Corée, his own good sense and prudence soon acquired him the confidence of the inhabitants. With the assistances that were offered him, he purchased himself a settlement, cultivated it, and rendered it flourishing; trade, which was then very brisk, enriched him in a short time, and in the space of five years he was become the object of the jealousy of the handsomest and richest widows and damsels of the colony. But alas! his fellow-collegian, who till that time had given him none but the most satisfactory news, now writ him word that his brother was ruined, and that his mother, abandoned by every body, was driven to the most dreadful extremities. This fatal letter was bedewed with tears. "Ah! my poor mother!" cried he, "I will fly to your relief." He would not trust this charge to any body. Accident, infidelity, neglect, or delay by a stranger, might deprive her of the assistance sent by her son, and leave her to perish in indigence and despair. "Nothing ought to retain a son," said he to himself, "when the honour and life of a mother are at stake."

With such sentiments, Corée was no longer employed but about the care of rendering his riches portable. He sold all his possessions, and this sacrifice cost his heart nothing; but he could not but feel some regret for a more precious treasure, which he left in America. Lucella, the young widow of an old colonist, who had left her immense riches, had cast upon Corée one of those looks which seem to penetrate to the bottom of the soul, and to unravel its character; one of those looks which decide the opinion, determine the inclination, and the sudden and confused effect of which is generally taken for a sympathetic emotion. She had imagined she saw in this young man every thing that could render a virtuous and sensible woman happy; and her love for him had not waited for reflection to give it birth and discover itself. Corée, on his side, had distinguished her among her rivals, as the most worthy of captivating the heart of a wise and virtuous man. Lucella, with a figure the most noble and interesting; an air the most animated, and yet the most modest; a brown complexion, but fresher than the rose; hair of the backness of the ebony, and teeth of a dazzling whiteness and enamel; the stature and gait of one of Diana's nymphs; the smile and look of the companions of Venus: Lucella with all these charms was endowed with that
greatness

greatness of spirit, that loftiness of temper, that justness in her ideas, that rectitude in her sentiments, which make us say, though not with the greatest propriety, that such a woman has the soul of a man. It was not one of Lucella's principles to be ashamed of a virtuous inclination. Scarce had Corée confessed to her the choice of his heart, when he obtained from her, without evasion, a like confession, by way of reply; and their mutual inclination becoming more tender, in proportion as it became more considered, now wanted nothing but the moment of being consecrated at the foot of the altar. Some disputes, concerning the inheritance of Lucella's husband, had retarded their happiness. These disputes were on the point of being settled, when the letter from Corée's friend arrived, to tear him all at once from what he held dearest in the world, except his mother. He repaired to the beautiful widow's, showed her the letter from his friend, and asked her advice. "I flatter myself," said she, "that you have no need of it. Convert your wealth into mercantile commodities, hasten to the relief of your mother, pay your respects to all your friends, and come back again: my fortune awaits you. If I die, my will shall secure it to you; if I live, instead of a will you know what right you will have over it."

Corée, struck with gratitude and admiration, seized the hands of this generous woman, and bathed them with his tears; but as he was launching out in encomiums on her, "Go," said she to him, "you are a child: entertain not the prejudices of Europe. The moment that a woman does any thing tolerably handsome, they cry her up as a prodigy, as if nature had not given us a soul. In my place now, should you be much pleased to see me in astonishment, viewing in you, as a phenomenon, the pure emotion of a good heart?" "Pardon me," said Corée, "I ought to have expected it; but your principles, your sentiments, the ease, the simplicity of your virtues enchant me: I admire them without being amazed at them." "Go, my dear," said she to him, saluting him, "I am thine such as God has made me. Do your duty, and return as soon as possible."

He embarks, and with him he embarks all his fortune. The passage was pretty favourable till they came towards the Canaries; but there their vessel, pursued by a corsair from Morocco, was obliged to seek for safety in its sails. The corsair which chased them was on the point of joining them; and the captain, terrified at the danger of being boarded, was going to strike to the pirate. "Oh!

" my

" my dear mother !" cried Corée, embracing the casket in which were contained all his hopes, and then tearing his hair with grief and rage, " No," said he, " this barbarous African shall first have my heart." Then addressing himself to the captain, the crew, and the affrighted passengers, " What ! my friends," said he, " shall we surrender ourselves like cowards ? Shall we suffer this robber to carry us to Morocco, loaded with irons ; and to sell us like beasts ? Are we disarmed ? Are the people on board the enemy's ship invulnerable ? or are they braver than we ? They want to board us ; let them board us : what then ? we shall have them the nearer." His courage re-animated their spirits, and the captain, embracing him extolled him for having set the example.

Every thing is now got ready for defence ; the corsair boards them : the vessels dash against each other : death flies on both sides. In a short time the two ships are covered with a cloud of smoke and fire. The cannonade ceases ; day-light appears, and the sword singles out its victims. Corée, with his sabre in his hand, made a dreadful slaughter ; the instant he saw an African throw himself on board, he ran up to him, and cleaved him in two, crying out, " Oh ! my poor mother !" His fury was as that of the lioness defending her

little ones ; it was the last effort of nature in despair ; and the gentlest, the most sensible heart that ever existed, was now become the most violent, and the most bloody. The captain discerned him everywhere, his eye flashing fire, and his arm drenched in blood. " 'This is not a mortal,' said he to his companions, " it is a god who fights for us." His example kindled their courage. He finds himself at length hand to hand with the chief of the barbarians. " My God," cried he, " have pity of my mother !" and at these words, with a back-handed blow, he let out the pirate's bowels. From this moment the victory was decisive : the few who were left of the crew of the corsair begged their lives, and were put into irons. Corée's vessel, with her booty, arrives at length on the coasts of France ; and this worthy son, without allowing himself one night's repose, repairs with his treasure to his unhappy mother. He finds her on the brink of the grave, and in a state more dreadful to her than death itself ; stripped of all relief, and in the care of one man-servant, who, disgusted at suffering the indigence to which she was reduced, paid her, with regret, the last duties of an humiliating pity. The shame of her situation had induced her to forbid this servant from admitting any person, except the priest

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priest and the charitable physician, who sometimes visited her. Corée asks to see her, and is refused.

"Tell my name," said he to the servant.
—"And what is your name?"—"Jemmy."
The servant approaches the bed. "A stranger," says he, "asks to see you, Madam."
—"Alas! and who is this stranger?"—"He says that his name is Jemmy." At this name her heart was so violently agitated, that she was near expiring. "Ah! my son," said she in a faint voice, and lifting upon him her dying eye-lids, "Ah! my son, at what a moment are you returned to see your mother! Your hand will soon close her eyes." What was the grief of this pious and tender child, to see that mother whom he had left in the bosom of luxury and opulence, to see her now in a bed surrounded with rags, and the very description of which would make the stomach rise, if it were permitted me to give it! "Oh! my mother," cried he, throwing himself upon this bed of woe: his sobs choked his voice, and the rivers of tears with which he bathed the bosom of his expiring mother, were for a long time the only expression of his grief and love. "Heaven punishes me," replied she, "for having loved too much an unnatural son; for having. . . ." He interrupted her: "All is made up, my dear
" dear

" dear mother," said this virtuous young man ;
 " live : Fortune has loaded me with her fa-
 " vours, I come to pour them out into the
 " lap of Nature : it is for you that they are
 " given me. Live : I have wherewith to make
 " you love life."—" Ah ! my dear child, if
 " I have any desire to live, it is to expiate my
 " injustice, it is to love a son of whom I was
 " not worthy, a son whom I have deprived
 " of his inheritance." At these words she
 covered her face as not worthy to see the
 light. " Ah ! Madam," cried he, pressing
 her in his arms, " deprive me not of the sight
 " of my mother. I am come across the seas
 " to seek and relieve her." At this instant
 the priest and the physician arrive. " See
 " there," said she, " my child, the only com-
 " forters that heaven has left me ; without
 " their charity I should now be no more." Corée
 embraces them, bursting into tears. " My friends !"
 says he to them, " my be-
 " nefactors ! what do I not owe you ! but for
 " you I should no longer have had a mother :
 " go on, recal her to life. I am rich ; I
 " am come to make her happy. Redouble
 " your cares, your consolations, your assist-
 " ances ; restore her to me." The physician
 prudently saw that this situation was too vio-
 lent for the sick lady. " Go, Sir," said he to
 Corée, " trust in our zeal, and have no other

" care

"care than to provide her a convenient and
"wholesome lodging. The lady shall this
"evening be removed there."

Change of air, proper nourishment, or rather the revolution created by joy, and the calm which succeeded it, insensibly re-animated in her the organs of life. A profound chagrin had been the ground of the disease; consolation was the remedy. Corée learned that his unhappy brother had just perished in misery. I draw the veil over the frightful picture of his death, which he had but too justly merited. They kept the knowledge of it from a feeling mother, who was as yet too weak to support, without expiring, a new attack of grief. She learnt it at last, when her health was better established. All the wounds of her heart were now again open, and the maternal tears trickled from her eyes. But heaven, while it took away from her a son unworthy of her tenderness, restored her one who had merited it by every sensible and touching tie of nature and of virtue. He confided to her the desires of his soul; which were to re-unite in his arms his mother and his wife. Madam Corée embraced with joy the prospect of going with her son over to America. A city filled with her follies, and her misfortunes, was to her an odious place of residence; and the moment in which she embarked restored her
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a new life. Heaven, which protects piety, granted them favourable winds. Lucella received the mother of her lover as she would have received her own mother. Hymen made of these lovers the happiest couple, and their days still roll on in that unalterable peace, in those pure and serene pleasures, which are the portion of virtue.



THE GOOD MOTHER.

THE care of a mother for her children is of all duties the most religiously observed in nature. This universal sentiment governs all the passions: it prevails even over the love of life. It renders the fiercest of animals sensible and gentle, the most sluggish indefatigable, the most timid courageous to excess: not one of them loses sight of its little ones, till the moment that their care of it becomes useless. We see only among mankind the odious examples of a too early desertion.

In the midst of a world, where vice, ingenious to disguise itself, takes a thousand seducing forms; it is there, above all, that the most

happy

happy disposition requires to be enlightened without ceasing. The more shelves there are, and the more they are hidden, the more need has the frail bark of innocence and happiness of a prudent pilot. What would have been, for example, the fate of Miss Tröene, if heaven had not made expressly for her a mother, such as there are very few to be met with ?

This respectable widow had devoted to the education of an only daughter the most agreeable years of her life. These were her reflections at the age of five and twenty.

“ I have lost my husband,” said she ;
“ I have nothing but my daughter and myself :
“ shall I live for myself ? or shall I live for
“ her ? The world smiles upon me, and pleases
“ me still ; but if I give myself up to it, I
“ abandon my daughter, and hazard her happiness and my own. Suppose that a life
“ of noise and dissipation has all the charms
“ that are attributed to it, how long may I
“ be able to taste them ? How few of my years,
“ which are rolling on, have I to pass in the
“ the world ? how many in solitude and the
“ bosom of my child ? This world, which invites me now, will dismiss me soon without pity ; and if my daughter should forget
“ herself, according to my example ; if she is
“ unhappy through my negligence, what will
“ be my comfort ? Let me in good time add
“ grace

" grace to my retreat : let me render it as agreeable as it is honourable ; and let me sacrifice to my daughter, who is every thing to me, that alien multitude, to whom in a short time I shall be nothing."

From that moment this prudent mother became the friend and companion of her daughter. But to obtain her confidence was not the work of a day.

Emily (that was the young lady's name) had received from nature a soul susceptible of the most lively impressions ; and her mother, who studied it incessantly, experienced an uneasy joy on perceiving this sensibility, which does so much harm and so much good. " Happy," said she sometimes, " happy the husband whom she will love, if he is deserving of her tenderness ; if by esteem and friendship he knows how to render dear to her the cares she shall take to please him ! but woe be to him, if he humbles and shocks her : her wounded delicacy will be the torment of them both. I see that if a reproach escapes even me, a slight complaint which she has not merited, tears of grief trickle from her eyes ; her drooping heart is dispirited. Nothing is easier than to manage her, nothing easier than to frighten her."

Temperate as was the life of Madam du Tröene, it was however conformable to her condition,

dition, and relative to the design she had of instructing herself at leisure in the choice of a husband worthy of Emily. A crowd of admirers, caught with the charms of the daughter, paid, according to custom, assiduous court to the mother. Of this number was the Marquis de Verglan, who, to his own misfortune, was endowed with a very handsome figure. His glass and the ladies had so often told him so, that he could not but believe it. He listened to them with pleasure, contemplated himself, with delight, smiled upon himself, and for ever sung his own praises. Nothing could be objected to his politeness ; but it was so cold, and so slight, in comparison to the attentions with which he honoured himself, that one might clearly perceive that he possessed the first place in his own esteem. He would have had, without thinking on them, all the graces of nature : he spoiled them all by affecting them. In regard to understanding, he wanted only justness, or rather reflection. Nobody would have talked better than he, if he had known what he was going to say ; but it was his first care to be of an opinion contrary to that of another. Right or wrong, was all one to him ; he was sure of dazzling, of seducing, of persuading to whatever he would. He knew by heart all that little toilette chit-chat, all those pretty

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which mean nothing. He was thoroughly versed in all the love-anecdotes of the city and court : who was the gallant of the evening, who of to-day, who of the morrow ; and how many times in the year such and such a lady had changed her admirers. He even knew a certain person who had refused to be upon the list, and who would have supplanted all his rivals, if he had chosen to give himself the trouble.

This young coxcomb was the son of an old friend of M. du Tröene, and the widow spoke of him to her daughter with a kind of compassion. “ It is a pity,” said she, “ that “ they spoil this young man.” He was well descended ; he might have succeeded : he had already succeeded but too well in the heart of Emily. That which is ridiculous in the eyes of a mother, is not always so in the eyes of a daughter. Youth is indulgent to youth ; and there are such things as beautiful defects.

Verglan, on his side, thought Emily tolerably handsome, only a little too plain and simple ; but that might be corrected. He took but very little care to please her ; but when the first impression is made, every thing contributes to sink it deeper. The very dissipation of this young fop was a new attraction to Emily ; she saw therein the danger of losing him ;

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him ; and nothing hastens, so much as jealously, the progress of a growing love.

In giving an account of his life to Madam du Tröene, Verglan represented himself (as to be sure he ought) the most desirable man in the world.

Madam du Tröene gave him obliquely a lesson on modesty ; but he protested that nobody was less vain than himself ; that he knew perfectly well that it was not for his own sake that they sought him ; that his birth did a great deal, and that he owed the rest to his wit and figure, qualities which he had not given himself, and which he was far from being proud of.

The more pleasure Emily felt in seeing and hearing him, the more care she took to conceal it. A reproach from her mother would have made a deep wound in her heart ; and this delicate sensibility rendered her fearful to excess.

In the mean time, Emily's charms, with which Verglan was so faintly touched, had inspired the wise and modest Belzors with the tenderest passion. A just way of thinking, and an upright heart, formed the basis of his character. His agreeable and open figure was ennobled still more by the high idea that was conceived of his soul ; for we are naturally disposed to seek, and believe that we discover,

in the features of a man, what we know to be in his heart.

Belzors, in whom nature had been directed to virtue from his infancy, enjoyed the inestimable advantage of being able to give himself up to it without precaution and constraint. Decency, honesty, candour, that frankness which gains confidence, that severity of manners which impresses respect, had in him the free ease of habit. An enemy to vice, but without pride; indulgent to follies, but without contracting any; complying with innocent customs, incorruptible by bad examples, he swam upon the torrent of the world; beloved, respected even by those to whom his life was a reproach, and to whom the public esteem had made it a practice to oppose it, in order to humble their pride.

Madam du Tröene, charmed with the character of this young man, had chosen him, in the bottom of her heart, as the most deserving husband she could give her daughter. She was inexhaustible in his commendations; Emily applauded with the modesty of her age. Madam du Tröene mistook the ingenuous and agreeable air which her daughter assumed towards him. As the esteem with which he inspired her was not mingled with any sentiment that she needed to conceal, Emily was quite at her ease.

It

It were to be wished, that she had been as free, as tranquil, with the dangerous Verglan; and the painful situation into which his presence cast her, had in good measure the appearance of spleen. If Madam du Tröene spoke in commendation of him, Emily looked down, and kept silence. "You do not seem to me, daughter," said Madam du Tröene, "to relish those light and shining graces, on which the world lays so much stress." "I know nothing at all of them," said Emily, blushing. The good mother concealed her joy: she thought she saw the plain and modest virtues of Belzors triumphing in Emily's heart over the little amiable vices of Verglan, and those like him. An accident, slight in appearance, but striking to an attentive and discerning mother, drew her out of this illusion.

One of Emily's accomplishments was drawing in crayons. She had chosen the delineation of flowers, as the most suitable to her age. It seemed so natural to see a rose blow beneath the hand of beauty! Verglan, by a taste somewhat resembling her's, was passionately fond of flowers: he was never seen without a nosegay, the prettiest in the world.

One day Madam du Tröene's eyes were thrown casually on Verglan's nosegay. The day after, she perceived that Emily, perhaps without thinking of it, was drawing the flowers

of it. It was very natural, that the flowers she had seen the evening before should be still present to her imagination, and come, as it were, of their own accord, to offer themselves to her pencil; but that which was not quite so natural, was the air of enthusiasm which she betrayed in drawing them. Her eyes sparkled with the fire of genius; her mouth smiled amorously at every stroke of the pencil, and a colour more animated than that of the flower which she wanted to represent, diffused itself over her lovely cheeks. "Are you pleased with your execution," said the mother to her carelessly? "It is impossible," replied Emily, "to represent Nature well, when we have her not before our eyes." It was certain, however, that she had never drawn her more faithfully.

Some few days after, Verglan came again with new flowers. Madam du Tröene, without any particularity, observed them, one after another; and, in Emily's next lesson, Verglan's nosegay was drawn again. The good mother continued her observations, and every trial confirming her suspicions, redoubled her uneasiness. "Alas!" said she, "I am alarmed perhaps at somewhat very innocent. Let me see, however, if she has any meaning in all this."

The

The studies and accomplishments of Emily were a secret to her mother's acquaintance. As she had only intended thereby to ensure to her agreeable hours of leisure, to make her relish solitude, and preserve her imagination from the dangers of meditation, and her active and sensible soul from the tediousness of idleness; Madam du Tröene derived neither to herself nor daughter, the least vanity from those talents which she cultivated with so much care. But one day when they were alone with Belzors, and the conversation turned on the great advantage of employing and satisfying one's self, "My daughter," said Madam du Tröene, "has created herself an amusement, which she relishes more and more. I want to have you see some of her designs." Emily opened her port-folio; and Belzors, charmed, was never weary of admiration of her performances. "How soft and pure," said he, "are the pleasures of innocence! In vain does vice torment itself, it will never taste the like. Confess, Madam, that the hour of labour passes away quick? Why you have fixed it: see it here re-traced and produced anew to your eyes. Time is never lost but to the idle." Madam du Tröene listened with a secret complacency. Emily thought his observations very sensible, but was not in the least touched by them.

Some

Some days after, Verglan came to see them. "Do you know, Sir," says Madam du Tröene, "that my daughter has received the highest encomiums from Belzors on her talent for drawing? I want you too to judge of it." Emily, in confusion, blushed, hesitated, said that she had nothing finished by her, and beseeched her mother to wait till she should have some piece fit to be seen. She did not doubt but her mother was laying a snare for her. "Since there is a mystery in this, there is also a design," said this discerning mother: "she is afraid that Verglan may know his own flowers, and penetrate into the secret motive of the pleasure which she has taken in drawing them. My daughter loves this young fop; my fears were but too well founded."

Madam du Tröene, solicited on all sides, excused herself still on account of Emily's youth, and the resolution she had taken herself not to constrain her in her choice. However, this choice alarmed her. "My daughter," said she, "is going to prefer Verglan: there is, at least, room to believe it, and this young man has every quality that can render a woman unhappy. If I declare my will to Emily, if I only suffer her to have the slightest perception of it, she will make it a law to herself to subscribe to it, without

“ out murmuring ; she will marry a man whom
“ she does not love, and the remembrance of
“ the man she loves will haunt her even in the
“ arms of another. I know her soul ; she will
“ become the victim of her duty. But shall
“ I ordain this grievous sacrifice ? God for-
“ bid ! No : let her own inclination decide
“ it ; but I may direct her inclination by en-
“ lightening it, and that is the only lawful
“ use of the authority that is given me. I am
“ certain of the goodness of heart, of the just-
“ ness of my daughter’s sentiments ; let me
“ supply, by the light natural to my years, the
“ inexperience of her’s ; let her see by her
“ mother’s eyes, and believe, if possible, that
“ she consults only her own inclination.”

Every time that Verglan and Belzors met together at Madam du Tröene’s, she turned the conversation on the manners, customs, and maxims of the world. She encouraged contradiction ; and, without taking any side, gave their dispositions room to display themselves. Those little adventures with which society abounds, and which entertain the idle curiosity of the circles at Paris, furnished most commonly matter for their reflections. Verglan, light, decisive, and lively, was constantly on the side of the fashion. Belzors, in a moderate tone, persisted to defend the cause of morality with a noble freedom.

The

The arrangement of Count d'Auberive with his lady was at that time the town-talk. It was said, that after a pretty brisk quarrel, and bitter complaints on both sides, on the subject of their mutual infidelity, they agreed, that they owed each other nothing; that they had ended by laughing at the folly of being jealous without loving; that d'Auberive had consented to see the Chevalier de Clange make love to his wife; and that she had promised on her side, to receive with the greatest politeness the Marchioness de Talbe, to whom d'Auberive paid his court; that the peace had been ratified by a supper, and that never two couple of lovers maintained better understanding with each other.

At this recital Verglan cried out, that nothing was wiser. "They talk of the good old times:" said he, "let them produce an instance of the manners of our forefathers comparable to this. Formerly an instance of infidelity set a family in flames; they shut up, they beat their wives. If their husbands made use of the liberty that was reserved to him, his sad and faithful half was obliged to put up with the injury, and vent her moans at home, as in an obscure prison. If she imitated her wandering husband, it was with terrible risks. Nothing less than her lover's and her own life were

" at

“ at stake. They had the folly to attach the
“ honour of the man to the virtue of his wife ;
“ and the husband, who was not the less a
“ fine gentleman for intriguing elsewhere him-
“ self, became the ridiculous object of public
“ contempt on the first false step that Madam
“ committed. Upon honour, I do not con-
“ ceive how, in these barbarous ages, they
“ had the courage to marry. The bands of
“ Hymen were then downright chains. Now-
“ a-days, see complaisance, freedom, peace,
“ reign in the bosom of families. If the mar-
“ ried pair love one another, so much the
“ better ; they live together, they are happy.
“ If they cease to love, they tell it like well-
“ bred persons, and dispense with each other’s
“ promise to be faithful. They give over be-
“ ing lovers, and become friends. This is
“ what I call social manners, free and easy.
“ This makes one long to be married.”
“ you find it then quite easy,” said Madam
“ du Tröene, “ for a wife to be the confidante
“ of her husband, and for him to be the com-
“ plaisant friend of his wife ?”—“ To be
“ sure, provided it be mutual. Is it not just
“ to grant our confidence to those who honour
“ us with theirs, and to render each other
“ by turns in life the offices of friendship ?
“ Can a man have a better friend than his
“ wife, or the wife a surer and more intimate
“ friend

“ friend than her husband ? With whom shall
 “ we be free, if not with the person, who,
 “ from situation, is one with us ? And when
 “ unfortunately we find no longer any plea-
 “ sure at home, what has any one better to
 “ do, than to seek it abroad, to return again
 “ each at their own time, without jealousy
 “ and restraint ? ”

“ Nothing is more pleasant,” said Belzors,
 “ than this new method ; but you and I have
 “ yet a great deal of ground to go over be-
 “ fore we can relish it. In the first place we
 “ must give up all love for ourselves, wife,
 “ and children ; we must be able to accustom
 “ ourselves to consider, without repugnance,
 “ as being one half of one’s self, somebody
 “ whom we despise sufficiently, to deliver up
 “ . . . ” “ Well,” replied Verglan, “ what,
 “ but mere prejudices, are all these scruples !
 “ what hinders us from esteeming one ano-
 “ ther, if it be settled that there is no longer
 “ any scandal in it ? ” When that is settled,”
 said Belzors, “ all the ties of society are
 “ broken. The inviolable sanctity of the
 “ marriage tie forms the sanctity of all the
 “ ties of nature. Remember, my friend, that
 “ if there are no longer any sacred duties for
 “ the parents, there will no longer be any
 “ for the children. All these connections
 “ depend on each other. Family quarrels
 “ were

“ were violent in the days of our fathers ;
“ but the mass of morals was found, and the
“ the wound soon closed up again. At pre-
“ sent it is a languishing body, which a slow
“ poison penetrates and consumes. On the
“ other side, my dear Verglan, we have not
“ now the idea of those pure and intimate
“ pleasures which the married pair felt amidst
“ their family ; nor of that union which form-
“ ed the delight of their youth, and the con-
“ solation of their advanced years. Now-a-
“ days, when a mother is afflicted at the dis-
“ sipations of her son, or a father overwhelm-
“ ed with any reverse of fortune ; are they a
“ refuge or support to each other ? They
“ are obliged to seek from without where to
“ unbosom their grief ; and the consolation of
“ strangers is very weak.”

“ You talk like an oracle, my sage Bel-
“ zors,” said Verglan. “ But who has told
“ you that two married persons would not do
“ best to love, and to be faithful to each o-
“ ther all their lives ? I am only, if unfor-
“ tunately this mutual liking should cease, for
“ their consoling each other, and settling mat-
“ ters amicably, without forbidding those who
“ may have loved each other from the times
“ of our fathers, to love on still, if their
“ heart inclines them to it.” “ Indeed,”
said Madam du Tröene, “ what is there to
VOL. II. D “ hinder

“hinder them?”—“What is there to hinder them, Madam?” replied Belzors. “Custom, example, the *bon ton*, the facility of living without shame, according to their liking. Verglan will readily confess to me, that the life led in the world is agreeable; and it is naturally pleasing enough to change the object: our very weakness invites us to it. Who will resist then this inclination, if they take off the rein from our morals?” “I, I take off nothing,” said Verglan; “but I am for every body’s living according to their liking, and I very much approve of the course that d’Auberive and his lady have taken to overlook reciprocally what is called injuries. If they are satisfied, every body else ought to be so too.”

As he finished these last words, a servant announced the Marquis d’Auberive. “Ah! Marquis, you come here very opportunely,” said Verglan to him: “tell us, prithee, if your story be true. They say that your lady forgives you your rhubarb, and that you pass by her sennet.” “Phis! what stuff!” said d’Auberive to him carelessly.—“I have maintained that nothing was more reasonable; but Belzors there condemns you without appeal.”—“Why so pray? Would not he have done as much? My wife is young and handsome; a coquette; that is quite

“ quite evident. At the bottom, however, I
“ believe her to be very virtuous ; but though
“ she should err a little, justice ought to be
“ sure to take place. I conceive, however,
“ that a person more jealous than myself may
“ condemn me ; but what astonishes me is,
“ that Belzors should be the first. I have
“ hitherto received nothing but commendations.
“ Nothing is more natural than my
“ proceeding ; and all the world felicitate me
“ upon it as on something marvellous. It
“ looks as if they did not think I had understanding
“ enough to take a reasonable step.
“ Upon honour, I am quite confounded at
“ the compliments I receive on it. As to the
“ rigid gentlemen, I honour them sufficiently ;
“ but I live for myself. Let every one do as
“ much, and the happiest will always be the
“ wisest.”—“ Well, how is the Marchioness ?
“ said Madam du Tröene to him, with a design
“ of changing the subject.—
“ Wonderfully well, Madam ; we supped last
“ night again together, and I never saw her in
“ such good-humour.” “ I will lay a wager,”
“ says Verglan, “ that you will take her again
“ some day.”—“ Faith, that may very possibly
“ be : even but yesterday, when we got
“ up from table, I caught myself saying ten-
“ der things to her.”

This first experiment made the most lively impression on Emily's understanding. Her mother, who perceived it, gave free course to her reflections; but in order to put her into the way, "It is wonderful," said she, "how much opinions depend upon tempers. Here now these two young men, educated with the same care, both endued with the same principles of honesty and virtue; observe, however, how they differ from one another! and each of them believes he is in the right." Emily's heart did its best to excuse in Verglan the fault of having defended the manners of the age. "With what levity," said she, "do they treat modesty and fidelity! how they sport with what is most sacred in nature! and Verglan gives into these irregularities! Why has he not the soul of Belzors!"

Some time after, Emily and her mother, being at the play, Belzors and Verglan presented themselves at their box, and Madam du Tröene invited them both to take their seats there. The play was *Ines* *. The scene of the children gave Verglan an opportunity of uttering some *bons mots*, which he put off as excellent criticisms. Belzors, without listening to him, melted into tears, and

* *Ines de Castro*, from which Mallet's *Elvira* is taken.

took no pains to conceal it. His rival raillied him on his weakness. "What," said he to him, "do children make you cry?" "And what would you have me be affected by?" said Belzors. "Yes, I confess it: I never hear without much emotion the tender names of father and mother; the pathos of nature penetrates me; even the most touching love interests me, moves me much less." *Ines* was followed by *Nanine* *; and when they came to the catastrophe, "Oh!" said *Ver-glan*, "that is carrying the jest too far: let *Dolban* love this little wench, with all my heart; but to marry her, I think, is rather too much." "It is a folly, perhaps," replied Belzors; "but I feel myself capable of it: when virtue and beauty are united, I cannot answer for my discretion." Not one of their observations escaped *Madam du Tröene*; *Emily*, still more attentive, blushed at the advantage which Belzors had over his rival. After the play, they saw the *Chevalier d'Olcet* pass by in weepers. "What is the meaning of this then, *Chevalier*?" said *Ver-glan* to him with an air of gaiety. "An old uncle," replies *d'Olcet*, "who has been so kind as to leave me ten thousand crowns a-year."—"Ten thousand crowns! Come

* A petit piece of Voltaire; the story somewhat like *Rameau*.

" then, let me embrace thee. This uncle
" was a brave old fellow. Ten thousand
" crowns ! charming." Belzors, embracing
him in his turn, said to him : " Chevalier,
" I condole with you on his death : I know
" that you think too justly to conceive any
" unnatural joy on the occasion." " He has
" long been as a father to me," said the Che-
valier, confounded at the pleasant air he had
assumed ; " but he was so old, you know !"
" That is a cause for patience," replied Bel-
zors with sweetness ; " but not for consol-
" tion. A good relation is the best of all
" friends ; and the riches he has left you are
" not equal to the value of such a one." " An
" old uncle is but a dull kind of a friend,"
said Verglan ; " and it is a rule, that every
" one must live in his turn. Young folks
" would be much to be pitied, if old fellows
" were immortal." Belzors changed the dis-
course, in order to spare Verglan an humiliat-
ing reply. At every stroke of this contrast,
Emily's heart was cruelly torn. Madam du
Tröene saw with joy the respectful and sen-
sible air she assumed towards Belzors, and the
cold and chagrined air with which he replied
to Verglan's compliments ; but in order to
bring about another trial, she invited them
both to supper.

They

They played at cards. Verglan and Belzors had a *tête-à-tête* at trictrac. Verglan liked nothing but high play; Belzors would play for as little as you pleased. The party was interesting. Mademoiselle du Tröene was of the number of lookers-on; and the good mother, in making her own party, kept an eye upon her daughter, to read in her countenance what passed in her heart. Fortune favoured Belzors; Emily, displeased as she was with Verglan, had too good a heart not to suffer, on seeing him engaged in a serious loss. The young coxcomb could no longer contain himself; he grew angry, he doubled the game, and, before supper, he was on the point of playing upon honour. Ill-humour had seized him: he did his utmost to be merry; but the alteration of his countenance banished all joy. He perceived himself that they pitied him, and that they did not laugh at some pleasantries he endeavoured to throw out; he was humbled, and indignation would have taken place, if they had not quitted the table. Belzors, whom neither his own good-luck, nor the chagrin of his rival, had moved, was easy and modest, according to custom. They sat down again to play. Madam du Tröene, who had finished her own party, came to be present at this, extremely uneasy at the issue it might have, but desirous that

that it might make its impression on the soul of Emily. The success exceeded her expectation : Verglan lost more than he had to pay : his trembling hand and pale countenance expressed the trouble he wanted to conceal. Belzors, with an unbounded complaisance, gave him as many opportunities of revenging himself, as he thought proper ; and when, by doubling the game, he had suffered Verglan to get off for a reasonable sum, " If you please," said he, " we will stop here : I think I may fairly win as much as I was resolved to lose." So much moderation and discretion excited a murmur of applause in the company. Verglan alone appeared insensible to it, and said, on getting up, with an air of disdain, " It was not worth the trouble of playing so long for."

Emily slept not that night, so violently was her soul agitated with what she had just seen and heard. " What a difference !" said she ; " and by what caprice is it that I must sigh at having been enlightened ? Ought not the seduction to cease, as soon as we perceive that we are seduced ? I admire one and love the other. What is this misunderstanding between the heart and the reason, which makes us still hold dear that which we cease to esteem ?"

In the morning she appeared, according to custom,

custom, at her mother's levée. "You seem
"to me altered," said Madam du Tröene to
her.—"Yes, Madam, I am very much so."
—"What, have you not slept well?"—
"Very little," said she, with a sigh.—"You
"must, however, endeavour to look hand-
"some; for I am going to take you this
"morning to the Thuilleries, where all Paris
"is to be assembled. I used to lament that
"the finest garden in the world was abandon-
"ed: I am very glad that they are come
"back to it again."

Verglan failed not to repair there, and Ma-
dam du Tröene retained him about her. The
view of this walk had the air of enchantment.
A thousand beauties, in all the lustre of bril-
liant dress, were seated round the basin,
whose sides are decorated by sculpture. The
superb walk which this basin crowns, was fil-
led with young nymphs, who by their charms
and accomplishments attracted the desires af-
ter their steps. Verglan knew them all, and
smiled upon them, following them with his
eyes. "This here," said he, "is Fatimé.
"Nothing is more tender and sensible: she
"lives like an angel with Cleon: he has given
"her twenty thousand crowns in six months;
"they love like two turtles. That there is
"the celebrated Corinna: her house is the
"temple of luxury; her suppers the most
"brilliant

“ brilliant in Paris : she does the honours of
“ them with a grace that enchants us. Do
“ you see that fair beauty who looks so mo-
“ dest, and whose glances wander languish-
“ ingly on every side ? She has three lovers,
“ each of whom flatters himself, that he alone
“ is the happy man. It is a pleasure to see
“ her amidst her adorers, distributing slight
“ favours to each, and persuading each in
“ their turns, that she jilts their rivals. She
“ is a model of coquetry, and nobody de-
“ ceives a set of lovers with so much address
“ and sprightliness. She will go a great way
“ on my word, and I have already told her
“ so.” “ You are in her confidence then ?”
said Madam du Tröene.—“ Oh, yes, they
“ don’t dissemble with me : they know me ;
“ they know very well, that they cannot im-
“ pose upon me.” “ And you, Belzors,”
said Madam du Tröene to the sensible and
virtuous young man, who had joined them,
“ are you initiated in these mysteries ?”—
“ No, Madam : I can believe that all that is
“ very amusing ; but the charm makes the
“ danger.” Madam du Tröene observed that
the modest women received, with a cold and
reserved air, the smiling and familiar salute
of Verglan, while they returned with an air
of esteem and friendship the respectful saluta-
tion of Belzors. She raillied Verglan on this
distinction,

distinction, in order to make Emilia perceive it. "It is true," said he, "Madam, that they behave rigidly to me in public; but *tête à tête*, they make me amends for it."

On her return home with them, she received a visit from Eleonora, a young widow of uncommon beauty. Eleonora spoke of the misfortune she had sustained in losing a deserving husband; she spoke of it, I say, with so much sensibility, candour and grace, that Madam du Tröene, Emily and Belzors listened to her, with tears in their eyes. "To a young handsome woman," said Verglan in a gay tone, "a husband is a trifling loss, and easy to be repaired." "Not to me, Sir," replied the tender and modest Eleonora: "a husband who honoured a wife of my age with his esteem and his confidence, and whose delicate love was never tainted either by fears or jealousy, or the negligences of habitude, is not one of those whom we can easily replace." "He had, I take it for granted, a fine person?" said Verglan.—"No, Sir, but his soul was beautiful." "A beautiful soul," replied Verglan, with a disdainful air, "a beautiful soul! He was young at least!"—"Not at all; he was of an age wherein we are affected when we have any occasion to be so."—"But if he was neither young, nor handsome, I do not see why

“ why you should afflict yourself. Confidence, esteem, handsome treatment, attend of course an amiable woman ; nothing of that kind could have been wanting to you. Believe me, Madam, the essential point is to suit yourself, as to age and figure, to unite the graces with the loves, in one word to marry a handsome man, or to preserve your liberty.” “ Your advice is very gallant,” replied Eleonora, “ but unfortunately it is misplaced.” “ There is a pretty prudè !” said Verglan, as soon as she was gone. “ Prudery, Sir,” replied Madam du Trône, “ is an exaggerated copy of prudence and reason ; and I see nothing in Eleonora but what is plain and natural.” “ For my part,” said Belzors, “ I think her as respectable as as she is handsome.” “ Respect her, friend, respect her,” resumed Verglan with vivacity : “ who hinders you ? ” “ She is the only person can take it ill.” Do you know,” interrupted Madam du Trône, “ who could console Eleonora ? Such a man as Belzors : and if I were the confidante that he consulted on his choice, I would persuade him to think of her.” You do me great honour, Madam,” said Belzors colouring ; but Eleonora deserves a heart that is disengaged, and unhappily mine is not so.” At these words he went out quite overcome with the

the dismissal which he thought he had received. "For in short," said he, "to invite me herself to pay my addresses to Eleonora, is not that giving me notice to renounce Emily? Alas! how little my heart is known to her!" Verglan who took it in the same sense, took upon him to pity his rival. He spoke of him as one of the honestest men in the world. "It is pity he is so gloomy," said he, with a tone of compassion: "that is all they get by their virtue, they grow tiresome, and are dismissed." Madam du Tröene, without explaining herself, assured him that she had not intended saying any thing disobliging to a man who was one of those whom she honoured most. In the mean time Emily sat with downcast eyes, and her colour betrayed the agitation of her soul. Verglan did not doubt but this confusion was an emotion of joy; he retired in triumph, and the day following wrote her a billet conceived in these terms. "You must have thought me very romantic, beautiful Emily, in having so long spoke to you only by my eyes! Do not accuse me of an unjust diffidence: I have read your heart, and if I had only that to consult, I should be very sure of its answer. But you depend on a mother, and mothers have their caprices. Happily your mother loves you, and her af-

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50 THE GOOD MOTHER,

“fection has enlightened her choice. The
 “dismissal of Belzors apprizes me that she
 “has determined ; but your consent ought to
 “precede hers : I wait it with the most tender
 “impatience, and the most violent love.”
 Emily opened this billet without knowing
 whence it came : she was as much offended as
 surprised at it, and without hesitation commu-
 nicated it to her mother. “I take very kindly
 “of you,” said Madam du Tröene, “this
 “mark of your friendship : but I owe you in
 “my turn confidence for confidence. Belzors
 “has writ to me ; read his letter.” Emily
 obeyed and read : “Madam, I honour the vir-
 “tue, I admire the beauty, I do justice to
 “Eleonora ; but has heaven favoured only
 “her ? and after having adored in your image
 “every thing that heaven has made most af-
 “fecting, do you think me in a condition to
 “follow the counsel which you have given
 “me ? I will not say to you how cruel it is ;
 “my respect stifles my complaints. If I have
 “not the name, I have at least the sentiments
 “of your son, and that character cannot be
 “effaced.”

Emily could not finish without the most
 lively emotion. Her mother pretended not to
 perceive it, and said to her, “There now,
 “child, I indeed must answer these two rivals ;
 “but you must dictate my answers.”—“I,
 “Madam !”

“Madam!”—“Who else? Is it I whom they demand in marriage? Is it my heart that I am to consult?”—“Ah! Madam, is not your will mine! Have not you the right to dispose of me!”—“All that, my child is very good; but as your own happiness is concerned in this affair, it is just that you should decide on it. These young men are both well born; their condition and fortunes nearly the same: see which comes up nearest to the idea you have formed of a good husband. Let us keep him, and dismiss the other.” Emily, struck, kissed her mother’s hands, and bathed them with her tears. “Complete your goodness,” said she to her, “by enlightning me in my choice: the more important it is, the more need have I for your counsels to determine it. The husband whom my mother shall chuse for me shall be dear to me; my heart dares promise you that.”—“No, my daughter, there is no loving out of mere duty, and you know better than myself the man who is fit to make you happy. If you are not so, I will console you: I would readily share your sorrows, but I would not be the cause of them. Come, I take pen in hand, I am going to write; you need but to dictate.” Imagine the trouble, the confusion, the moving situation of Emily. Trembling by the side

of this tender mother, one hand on her eyes and the other on her heart, she essayed in vain to obey her ; her voice expired on her lips. “ Well,” said the good mother, “ to which of the two are we to return an answer ? “ make an end, or I shall grow impatient.” “ ‘ To Verglan,’ said Emily, with a feeble and faltering voice.—“ ‘ To Verglan, be it so ; “ what shall I say to him ?”

“ It is impossible, Sir, that a man, so necessary as yourself to society, should renounce it to live in the bosom of his family. My Emily has not qualities sufficient to indemnify you for the sacrifices which she would require. Continue to embellish the world ; for it is for that you are made.”—“ Is this all ?”—“ Yes, Madam.”—“ And to Belzors, what shall we say to him ?” Emily continued to dictate with somewhat more confidence. “ To deem you worthy of a woman as virtuous as handsome, was not, Sir, to forbid you to make a choice which interests me as much as it does me honour ; it was even to encourage you. Your modesty has reversed things, and you have been unjust both towards yourself and towards me. Come and learn to judge better of the intentions of a good mother. I dispose of the heart of my daughter, and I esteem none in the world more than yourself.”

“ Come

“Come hither, my child, that I may embrace you,” cried Madam du Tröene; “you fulfil the wishes of your mother, and you could not have said better, though you had consulted my heart.”

Belzors hastened to them quite beside himself with joy. Never was marriage more applauded, more fortunate than theirs. Belzors’ affection was divided between Emilia and her mother, and it was a moot point in the world, which of the two he loved most.



THE

SHEPHERESS of the ALPS.

IN the mountains of Savoy, not far from the road from Briançon to Modena, is a solitary valley, the sight of which inspires travellers with a pleasing melancholy. Three little hills in form of an amphitheatre, on which are scattered, at a great distance from each other, some shepherd’s huts, torrents that fall from the mountains, clumps of trees planted

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here and there, pastures always green, form the ornament of this rural place.

The Marchioness of Fonrose was returning from France to Italy with her husband. The axle-tree of their carriage broke; and as the day was on the decline, they were obliged to seek in this valley for some shelter to pass the night. As they advanced towards one of the huts which they had perceived, they saw a flock going that way, conducted by a shepherdess whose gait astonished them. They drew nearer, and heard a heavenly voice, whose plaintive and moving accents made the echoes groan.

“How the setting sun glitters still with a gentle light! It is thus,” said she, “that at the end of a painful race, the soul exhausted goes to grow young again in the pure source of immortality. But alas, how distant is the period, and how slow is life!” On saying these words, the shepherdess retired with her head inclined; but the negligence of her attitude seemed to give still more nobleness and majesty to her person, and deportment.

Struck with what they saw, and still more with what they had just heard, the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose redouble their pace, in order to overtake this shepherdess whom they admired. But what was their surprise, when under the plainest head-dress, beneath

A MORAL TALE.

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neath the most humble garb, they saw all the graces, all the beauties united! "Child," said the Marchioness to her, on seeing that she avoided them, "fear nothing; we are travellers whom an accident obliges to seek shelter in these huts till the day: will you be so good as to be our guide?" "I pity you Madam," said the shepherdess to her, looking down and blushing: "these huts are inhabited by poor wretches, and you will be very ill lodged." "You lodge there without doubt yourself," replied the Marchioness; "and I can easily endure, for one night, the inconveniencies which you suffer always." "I am formed for that," said the shepherdess, with a modesty that charmed them. "No, surely," said the Marquis de Fontose, who could no longer dissemble the emotion she had caused in him; "no, you are not formed to suffer; and Fortune is very unjust! Is it possible, lovely damsel, that so many charms are buried in this desert, under these habits?" "Fortune, Sir," replied Adelaide, (this was the name of the shepherdess) "Fortune is not cruel but when she takes from us that which she has given us. My condition has its pleasures for one who knows no other, and custom creates wants for you, which shepherds do not know." "That may be," said the Marquis, "with respect
" to

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“to those whom heaven has placed from their
 “birth in this obscure condition ; but you,
 “astonishing damsel, you whom I admire,
 “you who enchant me, you were never born
 “what you now are ; that air, that gait, that
 “voice, that language, every thing betrays
 “you. But two words which you have just
 “now spoken, proclaim a cultivated under-
 “standing, a noble soul. Conclude, teach
 “us what misfortunes can have reduced you to
 “this strange abasement.” “For a man in
 “misfortune,” replied Adelaïde, “there are
 “a thousand ways to extricate himself ; for a
 “woman, you know, there is no other honest
 “resource than servitude, and in the choice of
 “masters. They do well, in my opinion,
 “who prefer the good. You are now going
 “to see mine ; you will be charmed with the
 “innocence of their lives, the candour, the
 “simplicity, the probity of their manners.”

While she talked thus, they arrived at the
 hut. It was separated by a partition from the
 fold into which this *incognita* drove her sheep,
 telling them over with the most serious atten-
 tion, and without deigning to take any further
 notice of the travellers, who contemplated
 her. An old man and his wife, such as Phi-
 lemon and Baucis are described to us, came
 forth to meet their guests with that village-
 honesty, which recalls the golden age to our
 minds.

minds. "We have nothing to offer you," said the good woman, "but fresh straw for a bed, milk, fruit and rie-bread for your food; but the little that heaven gives us, we will share with you most heartily." The travellers, on entering into the hut, were surprised at the air of regularity which every thing breathed there. The table was of one single plank of walnut-tree highly polished: they saw themselves in the enamel of the earthen vessels designed for their milk. Every thing presented the image of chearful poverty, and of the first wants of nature agreeably satisfied. "It is our dear daughter," said the good woman, "who takes upon her the management of our house. In the morning before her flock ramble far into the country, and while they begin to graze round the house on the grass covered with the dew, she washes, cleans, and sets every thing in order, with a dexterity that charms." "What!" said the Marchioness, "is this shepherdess your daughter?" "Ah! Madam, would to Heaven she were!" cried the good old woman; "it is my heart that names her so, for I have a mother's love for her; but I am not so happy as to have borne her; we are not worthy to have given her birth."—"Who is she then? Whence comes she?" "and what misfortune has reduced her to the

"con-

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“ condition of shepherds ? ” — “ All that is
 “ unknown to us. It is now four years since
 “ she came in the habit of a female peasant
 “ to offer herself to keep our flocks ; we
 “ would have taken her for nothing, so much
 “ had her good look and pleasing manner of
 “ expression won upon both our hearts. We
 “ doubted her being born a villager ; but our
 “ questions afflicted her, and we thought it
 “ our duty to abstain from them. This re-
 “ spect has but augmented in proportion as
 “ we have become better acquainted with her
 “ soul ; but the more we would humble our-
 “ selves to her, the more she humbles herself
 “ to us. Never had daughter more attention
 “ for her father and mother, nor officiousness
 “ more tender. She cannot obey us, because
 “ we are far from commanding her ; but it
 “ seems as if she saw through us, and every
 “ thing that we can wish is done, before we
 “ perceive that she thinks of it. She is an an-
 “ gel come down among us to comfort our
 “ old age.” “ And what is she doing now in
 “ the fold ? ” demanded the Marchioness. —
 “ Giving the flock fresh litter ; drawing the
 “ milk from the ewes and she-goats. This
 “ milk, pressed out by her hand, seems to be-
 “ come the more delicate for it. I who go
 “ and sell it in the town, cannot serve it fast
 “ enough. They think it delicious. The dear
 “ child

“ child employs herself, while she is watching
“ the flock, in works of straw and osier, which
“ are admired by all. Every thing becomes
“ valuable beneath her fingers. You see,
“ Madam,” continued the good old woman,
“ you see here the image of an easy and quiet
“ life : it is she that procures it to us. This
“ heavenly daughter is never employed but to
“ make us happy.” “ Is she happy herself ?”
“ demanded the Marquis de Fonrose. “ She
“ endeavours to persuade us so,” replied the
“ old man ; but I have frequently observed
“ to my wife, that at her return from the
“ pasture, she had her eyes bedewed with tears,
“ and the most afflicted air in the world. The
“ moment she sees us, she affects to smile :
“ but we see plainly that she has some grief
“ that consumes her. We dare not ask her
“ what it is. Ah ! Madam,” said the old wo-
man, “ how I suffer for this child, when she
“ persists in leading out her flocks to pasture
“ in spite of rain and frost ! many a time have
“ I thrown myself on my knees, in order to
“ prevail with her to let me go in her stead ;
“ but I never could prevail on her. She goes
“ out at sun-rise, and returns in the evening
“ benumbed with cold.” “ Judge now,” says
“ she to me,” whether I would suffer you to
“ quit your fire-side, and expose yourself at
“ your age to the rigours of the season. I am
“ scarce

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“ scarce able to withstand it myself. Never-
 “ theless, she brings home under her arm the
 “ wood with which we warm ourselves ; and
 “ when I complain of the fatigue she gives
 “ herself, Have done, have done, my good
 “ mother, it is by exercise that I keep myself
 “ from cold : labour is made for my age.”
 “ In short, Madam, she is as good as she is
 “ handsome, and my husband and I never
 “ speak of her, but with tears in our eyes.”
 “ And if she should be taken from you ? ” said
 “ the Marchioness. “ We would lose,” in-
 “ terrupted the old man, “ all that we hold dear-
 “ est in the world ; but if she herself was to
 “ be the happier for it, we would die content
 “ with that consolation.” “ Oh ! ay,” replied
 the old woman shedding tears, “ may heaven
 “ grant her a fortune worthy of her, if it be
 “ possible ! it was my hope, that that hand,
 “ so dear to me, would have closed my eyes,
 “ but I love her more than my life.” Her
 “ arrival broke off their discourse.

She appeared with a pail of milk in one
 hand, a basket of fruit in the other ; and after
 saluting them with a grace that charmed, she
 directed her attention to the care of the fa-
 mily, as if nobody observed her. “ You give
 “ yourself a great deal of trouble, my dear
 “ child,” said the Marchioness to her. “ I
 “ endeavour, Madam,” replied she, to fulfil
 “ the

“ the intention of those I serve, who are
“ desirous of entertaining you in the best man-
“ ner they are able. You will have,” con-
“ tinued she, spreading over the table a coarse,
but very white cloth, “ you will have a frugal
“ and rural repast : this bread is not the whit-
“ est in the world, but it tastes pretty well ;
“ the eggs are fresh, the milk is good, and the
“ fruits which I have just now gathered, are
“ such as the season affords.” The diligence,
the attention, the noble and becoming grace
with which this wonderful shepherdes paid
them all the duties of hospitality, the respect
she showed for her master and mistress, whe-
ther she spoke to them, or whether she sought
to read in their eyes what they wanted her to
do, all these things filled the Marquis and Mar-
chioness of Fonrose with astonishment and ad-
miration. As soon as they were laid down on
the bed of fresh straw which she had prepared
for them herself, “ Our adventure has the air
“ of a prodigy,” said they one to another,
“ we must clear up this mystery ; we must
“ carry away this child along with us.”

At break of day, one of the men, who had
been up all night mending their carriage, came
to inform them that it was thoroughly repaired.
Madam de Fonrose, before she set out, ordered
the shepherdes to be called to her. “ With-
“ out wanting to pry,” said she to her, “ into

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“ the secret of your birth, and the cause of
 “ your misfortune ; all that I see, all that I
 “ hear, interests me in your favour. I see
 “ that your spirit has raised you above ill for-
 “ tune ; and that you have suited your senti-
 “ ments to your present condition : your
 “ charms and your virtues render it respect-
 “ able, but yet it is unworthy of you. I
 “ have it in my power, amiable stranger, to
 “ procure you a happier lot ; my husband’s
 “ intentions agree entirely with mine, I have
 “ at Turin a considerable estate : I want a
 “ friend of my own sex, and I shall think I
 “ bear away from this place an invaluable
 “ treasure, if you will accompany me. Separate
 “ from the proposal, from the suit I now make
 “ you, all notion of servitude : I do not think
 “ you made for that condition ; but though
 “ my prepossessions in your favour should de-
 “ ceive me, I had rather raise you above your
 “ birth, than leave you beneath it. I repeat
 “ to you, it is a friend of my own sex that I
 “ want to attach to me. For the rest, be under
 “ no concern for the fate of these good people :
 “ there is nothing which I would not do to
 “ make them amends for your loss ; at least they
 “ shall have wherewith to spend the remainder
 “ of their lives happily in ease, according to
 “ their condition ; and it is from your hand
 “ that they shall receive the benefits I intend
 “ them.”

“ them.” The old folks, who were present at this discourse, kissing the hands of the Marchioness, and throwing themselves at her feet, begged the young *incognita* to accept of these generous offers : they represented to her with tears, that they were on the brink of the grave ; that she had no other consolation than to make them happy in their old age ; and that at their death, when left to herself, their habitation would become a dreadful solitude. The shepherdess, embracing them, mingled her tears with theirs ; she returned thanks to the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose for their goodness, with a sensibility that made her still more beautiful. “ I cannot,” said she, “ accept of your courtesies. Heaven

“ has marked out my place, and its will is accomplished ; but your goodness has made

“ impressions on my soul which will never be effaced. The respectable name of Fonrose

“ shall ever be present to my imagination.

“ I have but one favour more to ask you,” said she, blushing, and looking down, “ that

“ is, to be so good as to bury this adventure

“ in eternal silence, and to leave the world

“ for ever ignorant of the lot of an unknown

“ wretch, who wants to live and die in oblivion.” The Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose, moved with pity and grief, redoubled a thousand times their instances : she was

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immoveable, and the old people, the travellers, and the shepherdes separated with tears in their eyes.

During the journey the Marquis and his lady were taken up with nothing but this adventure. They thought they had been in a dream. Their imaginations being filled with this kind of romance, they arrive at Turin. It may easily be imagined that they did not keep silence, and this was an inexhaustible subject for reflections and conjectures. The young Fonrose, being present at these discourses, lost not one circumstance of them. He was at that age wherein the imagination is most lively, and the heart most susceptible of tenderness; but he was one of those characters whose sensibility displays not itself outwardly, and who are so much the more violently agitated, when they are so at all, as the sentiment which affects them does not weaken itself by any sort of dissipation. All that Fonrose hears said of the charms, virtues, and misfortunes of the shepherdes of Savoy, kindles in his soul the most ardent desire of seeing her. He forms to himself an image of her, which is always present to him. He compares her to every thing that he sees, and every thing that he sees vanishes before her. But the more his impatience redoubles, the more care he takes to conceal it. Turin becomes odious to him. The valley
which

which conceals from the world its brightest ornament, attracts his whole soul. It is there that happiness waits him. But if his project is known, he sees from thence the greatest obstacles : they will never consent to the journey he meditates ; it is the folly of a young man, the consequences of which they will be apprehensive of ; the shepherdes herself, affrighted at his pursuits, will not fail to withdraw herself from them ; he loses her, if he should be known. After all these reflections, which employed his thoughts for three months, he takes a resolution to quit every thing for her, to go, under the habit of a shepherd, to seek her in her solitude, and to die there, or draw her out of it.

He disappears ; they see him no more. His parents, who expect him, are uneasy at his absence : their fear increases every day : their expectations disappointed throw the whole family into affliction : the fruitlessness of their enquiries completes their despair ; a duel, an assassination, every thing that is most unfortunate, presents itself to their imagination ; and these unhappy parents ended their researches by lamenting the death of their son, their only hope. While his family are in mourning, Fonrose, under the habit of a shepherd, presents himself to the inhabitants of the hamlets adjoining to the valley, which they had

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but too well described to him. His ambition is accomplished : they trust him with the care of their flocks.

The first days after his arrival, he left them to wander at random, solely attentive to discover the places to which the shepherdes led hers.

“ Let us manage,” said he, “ the timidity
“ of this solitary fair-one : if she is unfor-
“ tunate, her heart has need of consolation ;
“ if it be nothing but a desire to banish her-
“ self from the world, and the pleasure of a
“ tranquil and innocent life, that retains her
“ here, she will feel some dull moments, and
“ wish for company to amuse or console her.
“ If I succeed so far as to render that agree-
“ able to her, she will soon find it necessary ;
“ then I shall take counsel from the situation
“ of her soul. After all, we are here alone,
“ as it were, in the world, and we shall be
“ every thing to each other. From confi-
“ dence to friendship the passage is not long,
“ and from friendship to love the road is still
“ easier at our age.” And what was Fonrose’s
age when he reasoned thus ? Fonrose was
eighteen ; but three months reflection on the
same object unfolds a number of ideas ! While
he was thus giving himself up to his imagin-
ation, with his eyes wandering over the coun-
try, he hears at a distance that voice, the
charms

charms of which had been so often extolled to him. The emotion it excited in him was as lively as if she had been unexpected. "It is here," said the shepherdess in her plaintive strains, "it is here that my heart enjoys the only happiness that remains to it. My grief has a luxury in it for my soul; I prefer its bitterness to the deceitful sweets of joy." These accents rent the sensible heart of Fonrose. "What," said he, "can be the cause of the chagrin that consumes her? How pleasing would it be to console her!" A hope still more pleasing presumed, not without difficulty, to flatter his desires. He feared to alarm the shepherdess if he resigned himself imprudently to his impatience of seeing her near, and for the first time it was sufficient to have heard her. The next day he went out again to lead his sheep to pasture; and after observing the route which she had taken, he placed himself at the foot of a rock, which the day before repeated to him the sounds of that touching voice. I forgot to mention that Fonrose, to the handsomest figure had joined those talents which the young nobility of Italy do not neglect. He played on the hautboy like Befuzzi, of whom he had taken his lessons, and who formed at that time the delight of Europe. Adelaïde, deeply buried in her own afflicting ideas, had not yet made her

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her voice heard, and the echoes kept silence. All on a sudden this silence was interrupted by the plaintive sounds of Fonrose's hautboy. These unknown sounds excited in the soul of Adelaïde a surprise mingled with anxiety. The keepers of the flocks that wandered on the hills had never caused her to hear aught before but the sounds of rustic pipes. Immoveable and attentive, she seeks with her eyes who it was that could form such harmonious sounds. She perceives, at a distance, a young shepherd seated in the cavity of a rock, at the foot of which he fed his flock; she draws near, to hear him the better. "See," said she, "what the mere instinct of nature can do!" "The ear teaches this shepherd all the refinements of the art. Can any one breathe purer sounds? What a delicacy in his inflections! what a variety in his gradations!" "Let them say after this, that taste is not a gift of nature." Ever since Adelaïde had dwelled in this solitude, this was the first time that her grief, suspended by an agreeable distraction, had delivered up her soul to the sweet emotion of pleasure. Fonrose, who saw her approach, and sat herself at the foot of a willow to hear him, pretended not to perceive her. He seized, without seeming to affect it, the moment of her retreat, and managed the course of his own flock in such a manner

manner as to meet her on the declivity of a hill, where the roads crossed. He cast only one look on her, and continued his route, as if taken up with nothing but the care of his flock. But what beauties had that one look ran over! What eyes! what a divine mouth! How much more ravishing still would those features be, which are so noble and touching in their languor, if love reanimated them! He saw plainly that grief alone had withered in their spring the roses on her lovely cheeks; but of so many charms, that which had moved him most was the noble elegance of her person and her gait; in the ease of her motions he thought he saw a young cedar, whose straight and flexible trunk yields gently to the zephyrs. This image, which love had just engraven in flaming characters on his memory, took up all his thoughts. "How feebly," said he, "have they painted to me this beauty unknown to the world, whose adoration she merits! And it is a desert that she inhabits! and it is thatch that covers her! She who ought to see kings at her feet, employs herself in tending a humble flock! Beneath what garments has she presented herself to my view? She adorns every thing, and nothing disfigures her. Yet what a life for a frame so delicate! Coarse food, a savage climate, a bed of straw,

" great

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“ great gods ! And for whom are the roses made ? Yes, I will draw her out of this state, so much too hard and too unworthy of her.” Sleep interrupted his reflections, but effaced not her image. Adelaïde, on her side, sensibly struck with the youth, the beauty of Fonrose, ceased not to admire the caprices of Fortune. “ Where is Nature going,” said she, “ to reassemble together so many talents and so many graces ! But, alas ! those gifts, which to him are here but useless, would be perhaps his misfortune in a more elevated state. What evils does not beauty create in the world ! Unhappy as I am ! is it for me to set any value on it ?” This melancholy reflection began to poison in her soul the pleasure she had tasted ; she reproached herself for having been sensible of it, and resolved to deny it herself for the future. The next day Fonrose thought he perceived that she avoided his approach ; he fell into a profound melancholy. “ Could she suspect my disguise ?” said he. “ Should I have betrayed it myself ?” This uneasiness possessed him all the live-long day, and his haut-boy was neglected. Adelaïde was not so far but she could easily have heard it ; and his silence astonished her. She began to sing herself. “ It seems,” said the song, “ that every thing around me partakes of my heaviness :
“ The

"The birds send forth none but sorrowful
"notes, Echo replies to me in complaints,
"the zephyrs moan amidst these leaves, the
"sound of the brooks imitates my sighs, one
"might say that they flowed with tears."
Fonrose, softened by these strains, could not
help replying to them. Never was concert
more moving than that of his hautboy with
Adelaide's voice. "O heaven," said she,
"it is enchantment ! I dare not believe my
"ears : it is not a shepherd, it is a god whom
"I have heard. Can the natural sense of
"harmony inspire such concord of sounds?"
While she was speaking thus, a rural, or ra-
ther a celestial melody made the valley re-
found. Adelaide thought she saw those pro-
digies realising which Poetry attributes to her
sprightly sister Musick. Astonished, con-
founded, she knew not whether she ought to
take herself away, or resign herself up to this
enchantment. But she perceived the shepherd
whom she had just heard, reassembling his
flock in order to regain his hut. "He knows
"not," says she, "the delight he diffuses
"around him ; his undisguised soul is not in
"the least the vainer for it : he waits not
"even for the praises I owe him. Such is
"the power of musick : it is the only talent
"that places its happiness in itself ; all the
"others require witnesses. This gift of
"heaven

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“ heaven was granted to man in his innocence : it is the purest of all pleasures. “ Alas ! it is the only one I still relish, and I “ consider this shepherd as a new echo who “ is come to answer to my grief.”

The following days Fonrose affected to keep at a distance in his turn : Adelaïde was afflicted at it. “ Chance,” said she, “ seemed “ to have procured me this feeble consolation ; I gave myself up to it too easily, and “ to punish me she has deprived me of it.” At last, one day when they happened to meet on the declivity of the hill, “ Shepherd,” said she to him, “ are you leading your flocks far “ off ?” These first words of Adelaïde caused an emotion in Fonrose, which almost deprived him of the use of his voice. “ I do not “ know,” said he hesitating ; “ It is not I “ who lead my flock, but my flock that leads “ me ; these places are better known to it “ than to me ; I leave to it the choice of the “ best pastures.” “ Whence are you then ?” said the shepherdess to him. “ I was born “ beyond the Alps,” replied Fonrose. “ Were “ you born among shepherds ?” continued she. “ As I am a shepherd,” said he looking down, “ I must have been born to be “ one.” “ I doubt it,” replied Adelaïde, viewing him with attention. “ Your talents, “ your language, your very air, all tell me, “ that

" that fate had placed you in a better situa-
 " tion." " You are very obliging," said
 Fonrose ; " but ought you, of all persons,
 " to believe that nature refuses every thing
 " to shepherds ! Were you born to be a
 " queen ?" Adelaïde blushed at this an-
 swer ; and changing the subject, " The other
 " day," said she, " by the sound of a hautboy
 " you accompanied my songs with an art that
 " would be a prodigy in a simple shepherd."
 " It is your voice that is so," replied Fonrose,
 " in a simple shepherdes."—" But has no
 " body instructed you ?" —" I have, like
 " yourself, no other guides than my heart and
 " my ear. You sung, I was melted ; what
 " my heart feels my hautboy expresses ; I
 " breathe my soul into it. This is the whole
 " of my secret ; nothing in the world is
 " easier." " That is incredible," said Ade-
 laïde. " I said the very same on hearing you,"
 replied Fonrose ; " but I was forced to be-
 " lieve it. What will you say ? Nature and
 " love take a delight sometimes in reuniting
 " all that they have most precious, in the
 " most humble fortune, to show that there is
 " no condition which they cannot ennoble."
 During this discourse, they advanced towards
 the valley ; and Fonrose, whom a ray of hope
 now animated, began to make the air resound
 with those sprightly notes which pleasure in-
 spires.

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spires. "Ah! prithee now," said Adelaïde, "spare my soul the troublesome image of a sentiment which she cannot relish. This solitude is consecrated to grief; her echos are not used to repeat the accents of a profane joy; here every thing groans in concert with me." "I have also cause to complain," replied the young man; and these words pronounced with a sigh, were followed by a long silence. "You have cause to complain!" replied Adelaïde: "is it of mankind, is it of fortune?" "I know not," said he: "but I am not happy; ask me no more." "Hear," said Adelaïde: "heaven gives us to each other as a consolation in our troubles; mine are like an overwhelming load, which weighs down my heart. Whoever you may be, if you know misfortune, you ought to be compassionate, and I believe you worthy of my confidence; but promise me that it shall be mutual." "Alas!" said Fonrose, "my misfortunes are such, that I shall be perhaps condemned never to reveal them." This mystery but redoubled the curiosity of Adelaïde. "Repair to-morrow, said she to him, "to the foot of that hill, beneath that old tufted oak, where you have heard me moan. There I will teach you things that will excite your pity." Fonrose passed the night in the utmost

most emotion. His fate depended on what he was going to hear. A thousand alarming ideas agitated him in turn. He dreaded, above all, the being driven to despair by the communication of an unsuccessful and faithful love. "If she is in love," said he, "I am undone."

He repairs to the appointed place. He sees Adelaïde arrive. The day was overcast with clouds, and nature, mourning, seemed to forbode the sadness of their conversation. As soon as they were seated at the foot of the oak, Adelaïde spoke thus. "You see these stones which the grass begins to cover; they are the tomb of the most tender, the most virtuous of men, whom my love and my imprudence have cost his life. I am a French woman, of a family of distinction, and, to my misfortune, too rich." The Count d'Orestan conceived the tenderest passion for me; I was sensible to it, sensible to excess. My parents opposed the inclination of our hearts, and my frantic passion made me consent to a marriage sacred to virtuous souls, but disallowed by the laws. Italy was at that time the theatre of war. My husband went there to join the corps which he was to command: I followed him as far as Briançon: my foolish tenderness retained him there two days, in spite of himself. The young man, full of ho-

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"nour, prolonged his stay there with the
 "greatest reluctance. He sacrificed his duty
 "to me; but what would not I have sacri-
 "ficed to him? In a word, I required it of
 "him; he could not withstand my tears. He
 "took leave with a presage at which I was
 "myself alarmed: I accompanied him as far
 "as this valley, where I received his adieus;
 "and in order to wait to hear from him, I
 "returned to Briançon. A few days after, a
 "report was spread of a battle. I doubted
 "whether d'Orestan had got thither; I wish-
 "ed it for his honour, I dreaded it for my
 "love, when I received from himself a letter,
 "which I thought very consoling! "I shall
 "be such a day, at such an hour," said he to
 "me, "in the valley, and under the oak where
 "we parted; I shall repair there alone; I
 "conjure you to go there, and expect me
 "likewise alone; I live yet but for you."
 "How great was my mistake! I perceived in
 "this billet nothing more than an impatience
 "to see me again, and I congratulated my-
 "self on this impatience. I repaired then to
 "this very oak. D'Orestan arrives, and, af-
 "ter the tenderest reception, "You would
 "have it so, my dear Adelaïde," said he;
 "I have failed in my duty at the most impor-
 "tant moment of my life. What I feared is
 "come to pass. A battle has happened; my
 "regiment

“ regiment charged ; it performed prodigies
“ of valour, and I was not there. I am dis-
“ honoured, lost without resource. I re-
“ proach not you with my misfortune ; but I
“ have now but one sacrifice more to make
“ you, and my heart is come to accomplish it.”
“ At this discourse, pale, trembling, and
“ scarce breathing, I took my husband into
“ my arms. I felt my blood congeal in my
“ veins, my knees bent under me, and I fell
“ down senseless. He availed himself of my
“ fainting to tear himself from my bosom,
“ and in a little time I was recalled to life by
“ the report of a shot, which killed him. I
“ will not describe to you the situation I was
“ in ; it is inexpressible ; and the tears which
“ you now see flowing, the sighs that stifle
“ my voice, are but a feeble image of it. Af-
“ ter passing the whole night beside his bloody
“ corpse in a grief that stupified me, my
“ first care was, to bury along with him my
“ shame : my hands dug out his grave. I
“ seek not to move you ; but the moment in
“ which the earth was to separate me from
“ the sorrowful remains of my husband, was
“ a thousand times more dreadful to me than
“ that can be which is to separate my body
“ from my soul. Spent with grief, and de-
“ prived of nourishment, my enfeebled hands
“ took up two whole days in hollowing out

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" this tomb with inconceivable labour. When
 " my strength forsook me, I reposed myself
 " on the livid and cold bosom of my husband.
 " In short, I paid him the rites of a sepulture,
 " and my heart promised him to wait in these
 " parts till death reunites us. In the mean
 " time, cruel hunger began to devour my
 " exhausted entrails. I thought it criminal to
 " refuse nature the supports of a life more
 " grievous than death. I changed my gar-
 " ments for the plain habit of a shepherdess,
 " and I embraced that condition as my only
 " refuge. From that time my only consol-
 " tion has been to come here, and weep over
 " this grave, which shall be my own. You
 " see," continued she, " with what sincerity
 " I open my soul to you. With you I may
 " henceforth weep at liberty; it is a conso-
 " lation I had need of; but I expect the same
 " confidence from you. Do not think that
 " you have deceived me. I see clearly, that
 " the state of a shepherd is as foreign, and
 " newer to you than to me. You are young,
 " perhaps sensible; and, if I may believe my
 " conjectures, our misfortunes have the same
 " source, and you have loved as well as I.
 " We shall only feel the more on that account
 " for one another. I consider you as a friend,
 " whom heaven, touched by my misfortunes,
 " deigns to send me in my solitude, Do you
 " also

"also consider me as a friend, capable of giving you, if not salutary counsels, at least consolatory examples."

"You pierce my very soul," said Fonrose, overcome with what he had just heard; "and whatever sensibility you may attribute to me, you are very far from conceiving the impression that the recital of your misfortunes has made on me. Alas! why cannot I return it with that confidence which you testify towards me, and of which you are so worthy! But I warned you of it; I foresaw it. Such is the nature of my sorrows, that an eternal silence must shut them up in the bottom of my heart. You are very unhappy," added he with a profound sigh: "I am still more unhappy: this is all I can tell you. Be not offended at my silence; it is terrible to me to be condemned to it. The constant companion of all your steps, I will soften your labours, I will partake all your griefs: I will see you weep over this grave, I will mingle my tears with yours. You shall not repent having deposited your woes in a heart, alas! but too sensible." "I repent me of it from this moment," said she with confusion; and both, with downcast eyes, retired in silence from each other. Adelaïde, on quitting Fonrose, thought she saw in his countenance the

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the impression of a profound grief. "I have
"revived," said she, "the sense of his sorrows ;
"and what must be their horror, when he
"thinks himself still more wretched than I !"

From that day more singing and more conversation followed between Fonrose and Adelaïde. They neither sought nor avoided one another : looks in which consternation was painted formed almost their only language ; if he found her weeping over the grave of her husband, his heart seized with pity, jealousy and grief, he contemplated her in silence, and answered her sighs with deep groans.

Two months had passed away in this painful situation, and Adelaïde saw Fonrose's youth wither as a flower. The sorrow which consumed him afflicted her so much the more deeply, as the cause of it was unknown to her. She had not the most distant suspicion that she was the object of it. However, as it is natural, when two sentiments divide a soul, for one to weaken the other, Adelaïde's regret on account of the death of d'Orestan became less lively every day, in proportion as she delivered up herself more entirely to the pity with which Fonrose inspired her. She was very sure that this pity had nothing but what was innocent in it ; it did not even come into her head to defend herself from it ; and the object of this generous sentiment being continually present
to

to her view, awakened it every instant. The languor into which this young man was fallen became such, that she thought it her duty not to leave him any longer delivered up to himself. "You are dying," said she to him, "and you add to my griefs that of seeing you consumed with sorrow under my eye, without being able to apply any remedy. If the recital of the imprudences of my youth has not inspired you with a contempt for me ; if the purest and tenderest friendship be dear to you ; in short, if you would not render me more unhappy than I was before I knew you, confide to me the cause of your griefs : you have no person in the world but myself to assist you in supporting them : your secret, though it were more important than mine, fear not that I shall divulge. The death of my husband has placed a gulf betwixt the world and me ; and the confidence which I require will soon be buried in this grave, to which grief is with slow steps conducting me." "I hope to go before you," said Fonrose, bursting into tears. "Suffer me to finish my deplorable life without leaving you afterwards the reproach of having shortened its course."—"O heaven, what do I hear !" cried she with distraction. "What, I, can I have contributed to the evils which overwhelm you ? Go on, you pierce

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“ pierce my soul. What have I done? what
“ have I said! Alas, I tremble! Good
“ heaven! hast thou sent me into the world
“ only to create wretches? Speak, I say:
“ you must no longer conceal from me who
“ you are; you have said too much about it
“ to dissemble any longer.”—“ Well then, I
“ am, . . . I am Fonrose, the son of those
“ travellers whom you filled with admiration
“ and respect. All that they related of your
“ virtues and your charms inspired me with
“ the fatal design of coming to see you in this
“ disguise. I have left my family in the deep-
“ est sorrow, thinking they have lost me, and
“ lamenting my death. I have seen you, I
“ know what attaches you to these places, I
“ know that the only hope that is left me is
“ to die here adoring you. Give me no use-
“ less counsels and unjust reproaches. My
“ resolution is as firm, as immoveable as your
“ own. If, in betraying my secret, you dis-
“ turb the last moments of a life almost at an
“ end, you will to no purpose injure me,
“ who would never offend you.”

Adelaïde, confounded, endeavoured to calm
the despair into which this young man was
plunged. “ Let me,” said she, “ do to his
“ parents the service of restoring him to life;
“ let me save their only hope: heaven pre-
“ sents me with this opportunity of acknow-
“ ledging

“ledging their favours.” Thus, far from making him furious by a misplaced rigour, all that pity has most tender in it, and friendship most consoling, was put in practice in order to soothe him.

“Heavenly angel,” cried Fonrose, “I see all the reluctance that you feel to make any one unhappy: your heart is his who reposes in this grave; I see that nothing can detach you from him: I see how ingenious your virtue is to conceal your woe from me; I perceive it in all its extent, I am overwhelmed by it, but I pardon it in you; it is your duty never to love me, it is mine ever to adore you.”

Impatient of executing the design which she had conceived, Adelaïde arrives at her hut, “Father,” said she to her old master, “do you think you have strength to travel to Turin? I have need of somebody whom I can trust, to give the Marquis and Marchioness of Fonrose the most interesting intelligence.” The old man replied, that his zeal to serve them inspired him with courage. “Go,” resumed Adelaïde; “you will find them bewailing the death of their only son; tell them that he is living, and in these parts, and that it is I who will restore him to them; but that there is an indispensable necessity
“for

“ for their coming here themselves to fetch him.”

He sets out, arrives at Turin, sends in his address as the old man of the valley of Savoy.

“ Ah !” cried Madam de Fonrose, “ some misfortune perhaps has happened to our shepherdes.” “ Let him come in,” added

the Marquis, “ he will tell us perhaps that she consents to live with us.” “ After the

loss of my son,” said the Marchioness, “ it is the only comfort I can taste in this world.”

The old man is introduced. He throws himself at their feet : they raise him. “ You are

lamenting the death of your son,” said he to them ; “ I come to tell you that he lives :

“ it is our dear child that has discovered him in the valley : she sends me to inform you

“ of it ; but yourselves only, she says, can bring him back.” As he spoke this, sur-

prise and joy deprived the Marchioness of Fonrose of the use of her senses. The Mar-

quis, distracted and amazed, calls out for help for his lady, recalls her to life, embraces the old man, publishes to the whole house

that their son is restored to them. The Marchioness resuming her spirits, “ What shall we

“ do ?” said she, taking the old man by the hands, and pressing them with tenderness,

“ what shall we do in the gratitude for this benefit which restores life to us ?”

Every

Every thing is ordered for their departure. They set out with the good man; they travel night and day; they repair to the valley, where their only good awaits them. The shepherdess was out at pasture: the old woman conducts them to her; they approach. How great is their surprise! their son, that well-beloved son is by her side in the habit of a simple shepherd. Their hearts sooner than their eyes acknowledge him. "Ah! cruel child," cried his mother, throwing herself into his arms, "what sorrow have you occasioned us! why withdraw yourself from our tenderness? and what is it you come here for?" "To adore," said he, "what you yourself admired." "Pardon me, Madam," said Adelaide, while Fonrose embraced his father's knees, who raised him with kindness; "pardon me for having left you so long in grief: if I had known it sooner, you should have been sooner consoled." After the first emotions of nature, Fonrose relapsed into the deepest affliction. "Let us go," said the Marquis, "let us go rest ourselves in the hut, and forget all the pain that this young madman has occasioned us." "Yes, Sir, I have been mad," said Fonrose to his father, who led him by the hand: "nothing but the loss of my reason could have suspended in my heart the emotions of na-

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"ture, so as to make me forget the most sacred
 "duties ; in short, to detach myself from every
 "thing that I held dearest in the world ; but
 "this madness you gave birth to, and I am
 "but too severely punished for it. I love
 "without hope the most accomplished person
 "in the world : you see nothing, you know
 "nothing of this incomparable woman : she
 "is honesty, sensibility, virtue itself : I love
 "her even to idolatry, I cannot be happy
 "without her, and I know that she cannot be
 "mine." "Has she confided to you," said
 "the Marquis, "the secret of her birth?" "I
 "have learned enough of it," said Fonrose,
 "to assure you, that it is in no respect be-
 "neath my own ; she has even renounced a
 "considerable fortune to bury herself in this
 "desert."—"And do you know what has
 "induced her to it?"—"Yes, Sir ; but it
 "is a secret which she alone can reveal to
 "you."—"She is married, perhaps?"—
 "She is a widow ; but her heart is not the
 "more disengaged ; her ties are but too strong."
 "Daughter," said the Marquis, on entering
 the hut, "you see that you turn the heads of
 "the whole family of Fonrose. The extra-
 "vagant passion of this young man cannot be
 "justified but by such a prodigy as you are.
 "All my wife's wishes are confined to have
 "you for a companion, and a friend : this
 "child

"child here will not live unless he obtains
 "you for his wife; I desire no less to have
 "you for my daughter; see how many per-
 "sons you will make unhappy by a refusal."
 "Ah! Sir," said she, "your goodness con-
 "founds me; but hear and judge for me."
 Then Adelaïde, in the presence of the old
 man and his wife, made a recital of her de-
 plorable adventure. She added the name of
 her family, which was not unknown to the
 Marquis de Fonrose, and ended by calling on
 himself to witness the inviolable fidelity she
 owed her spouse. At these words, conster-
 nation spread itself over every countenance:
 Young Fonrose, choaked with sobs, threw him-
 self into a corner of the hut, in order to give
 them free scope. The father, moved at the
 sight, flew to the assistance of his son: "See,"
 said he, "my dear Adelaïde, to what a con-
 "dition you have reduced him." Madam de
 Fonrose, who was near Adelaïde, pressed her
 in her arms, bathing her at the same time with
 her tears. "Alas! why, my daughter," said
 she, "will you a second time make us mourn
 "the death of our dear child?" The old man
 and his wife, their eyes filled with tears, and
 fixed upon Adelaïde, waited her speaking.
 "Heaven is my witness," said Adelaïde, rising;
 "that I would lay down my life, in gratitude
 "for such goodness. It would heighten my

" misfortunes to have occasion to reproach
 " myself with yours; but I am willing that
 Fonrose himself should be my judge: suffer
 " me, if you please, to speak to him for a
 " moment." Then retiring with him alone,
 " Hear," said she to him, " Fonrose, you
 " know what sacred ties retain me in this
 " place. If I could cease to love and lament
 " a husband who loved me but too well, I
 " should be the most despicable of women.
 " Esteem, friendship, gratitude, are the senti-
 " ments I owe you; but none of these take
 " place of love: the more you have conceiv-
 " ed for me, the more you should expect
 " from me: it is the impossibility of fulfil-
 " ling that duty, that hinders my imposing
 " it on myself. In the mean time, I see you
 " in a situation that would move the least
 " sensible heart; it is shocking to me to be
 " the cause, it would be still more shocking to
 " me to hear your parents accuse me with ha-
 " ving been your destruction. I will then for-
 " get myself for the present, and leave you, as
 " far as in me lies, to be the arbiter of our
 " destiny. It is for you to chuse that of the
 " the two situations which appears to you least
 " painful, either to renounce me, to subdue
 " yourself, and forget me; or to possess a wo-
 " man, whose heart, being full of another ob-
 " ject, can only grant you sentiments too feeble

" to

“to satisfy the wishes of a lover.” “That is enough,” said Fonrose, “and, in a soul like yours, friendship should take place of love. I shall be jealous, without doubt, of the tears which you shall bestow to the memory of another husband; but the cause of that jealousy, in rendering you more respectable, will render you also more dear in my eyes.”

“She is mine,” said he, coming and throwing himself into the arms of his parents; “it is to her respect for you, to your goodness, that I owe her, and it is owing you a second life.” From that moment their arms were chains from which Adelaïde could not disengage herself.

Did she yield only to pity, to gratitude? I would fain believe it, in order to admire her the more: Adelaïde believed so herself. However it be, before she set out, she would revisit the tomb, which she quitted but with regret. “O my dear d’Orestan!” said she, “if from the womb of the dead thou canst read the bottom of my soul, thy shade has no cause to murmur at the sacrifice I make: I owe it to the generous sentiments of this virtuous family; but my heart remains thine for ever. I go to endeavour to make them happy, without any hope of being myself so.” It was not without some sort of vio-

lence they forced her from the place ; but she insisted that they should there erect a monument to the memory of her husband, and that the hut of her old master and mistress, who followed her to Turin, should be converted into a country-house, as plain as it was solitary, where she proposed to come sometimes to mourn the errors and misfortunes of her youth. Time, the assiduities of Fonrose, the fruits of her second marriage, have since opened her soul to the impressions of a new affection ; and they cite her as an example of a woman remarkable, and respectable, even in her infidelity.



THE HAPPY DIVORCE.

UNEASINESS and inconstancy are, in the greatest part of mankind, nothing more than the consequence of false calculation. Too strong a prepossession in favour of the happiness we desire, makes us experience as soon as we possess it, that uneasiness and disgust, which suffer us to relish nothing. The imagination deceived, and the heart dissatisfied, wander to new objects, the prospect of which dazzles

dazzles in its turn, and the approach disabuses us. Thus from illusion to illusion, life is passed away in changing the chimera : this is the malady of lively and delicate souls ; nature has nothing sufficiently perfect for them : whence it proceeds that it is thought such a mighty matter to fix the taste of a pretty woman.

Lucilia, in the convent, had painted to herself the charms of love, and the delights of marriage, with the colouring of an imagination of a girl of fifteen, whose flower nothing had yet tarnished.

She had seen the world only in those ingenious fictions which are the romance of human nature. It costs nothing to an eloquent man to give love and marriage all the charms that he conceives. Lucilia, according to these pictures, saw lovers and husbands only as they are to be met with in fables, always tender and full of love, saying nothing but fine things, taken up solely with the care of pleasing, new homages, or pleasures eternally varied.

Such was the prepossession of Lucilia, when they came to draw her out of the convent to marry the Marquis de Lifere. His engaging and noble figure inspired her with a favourable opinion of him. His first addresses succeeded in determining the irresolution of her soul. She saw not yet in the Marquis the ardour of a passionate lover ; but she thought modestly

modestly enough of herself not to pretend to set him on fire at the first sight. This liking, easy in its birth, would make a rapid progress: he must have time. However, the marriage was concluded upon, and solemnized before the inclination of the Marquis was grown a violent passion.

Nothing was more steady or solid than the temper of the Marquis de Lifere. In marrying a young woman, he proposed to himself, in order to make her happy, to begin by being her friend, persuaded that an honest man does whatever he pleases with a well-disposed woman, when he has gained her confidence; and that a husband, who makes himself dreaded, invites his wife to deceive him, and authorises her to hate him.

In order to follow the plan which he had traced out to himself, it was necessary not to be a too passionate lover: passion knows no rule. He had considered himself well before his engagement, on the kind of liking with which Lucilia inspired him, resolved never to marry a woman, whom he should love to distraction. Lucilia found in her husband only that lively and tender friendship, that attentive and constant complaisance, that soft and pure pleasure, that love, in short, which has neither its hot nor cold fits. At first, she flattered herself that intoxication, enchantment, transports, would

would have their turn ; but the soul of Lifere was unalterable.

“ This is very extraordinary,” said she ; I
“ am young, I am handsome, and my husband
“ don’t love me ! I am his, and he thinks it
“ enough to possess me with coldness. But
“ then why suffer him to be cold ? Can he
“ have any violent longings for what is in his
“ power without reserve or trouble ? He would
“ become passionately fond of me, if he were
“ jealous. How unjust are men ! We must
“ torment them in order to please them. Be
“ tender, faithful, fond, they neglect, they
“ disdain you. An even course of happiness
“ makes them dull. Caprice, coquetry, in-
“ constancy, rouse and enliven them : they set
“ no value on pleasure, but in proportion to the
“ trouble it gives them. Lifere, less sure of
“ being beloved, will become a thousand times
“ fonder himself. That is easy ; let me be in
“ the fashion. Every thing around me pre-
“ sents me with enough to make him uneasy,
“ if he is capable of jealousy.”

After this fine project, Lucilia gave herself
up to dissipation, to coquetry ; she assumed a
mystery in all her proceedings ; she made par-
ties without the Marquis. “ Did I not foresee
“ it,” said he to himself, “ that I had a wife
“ like other women ? Six months after mar-
“ riage, she begins to be tired of it. I should
“ be

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" be a happy man now if I were passionately,
 " fond of my wife ! Happily my liking and
 " my esteem for her leave me full enjoyment
 " of my reason : I must make use of it, dissem-
 " ble, subdue myself, and employ nothing but
 " gentleness and soothing measures, to keep
 " her in order. They do not always succeed,
 " but reproaches, complaints, restraint and
 " violence succeed still less." The moderation,
 complaisance, and tranquillity of the Marquis,
 put Lucilia out of all patience. " Alas !"
 said she, " do what I will, 'tis all to no-
 " purpose, this man will never love me : he is
 " one of those cold souls whom nothing moves,
 " nothing engages, and I am condemned to
 " pass my life with a stone that knows neither
 " how to love, nor hate : O, the delights of
 " sensible souls, the charm of impassioned
 " hearts ! Love, who raisest us to heaven on
 " thy fiery pinions ! where are those flaming
 " darts, with which thou woundest happy lo-
 " vers ? where is that intoxication into which
 " thou plungest them ? where are those ravish-
 " ing transports with which they mutually in-
 " spire each other ? Where are they ?" con-
 " tinued she. " In free and independent love,
 " in the disposal of two hearts which give a
 " loose to themselves. And why should the
 " Marquis be fond ? What sacrifice have I
 " made him ? By what marks of courage, by
 " what

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“ what heroic devotion of myself have I
“ moved the sensibility of his soul ! Where is
“ the merit of having obeyed, of having ac-
“ cepted for a husband an amiable and rich
“ young man, whom they chose without my
“ consent ? Is it for love to interfere in a mar-
“ riage of convenience ? But is this then the
“ lot of a woman of sixteen, to whom, without
“ vanity, nature has given wherewith to please,
“ and still more, wherewith to love ? For
“ after all I cannot conceal from myself the
“ graces of my figure, nor the sensibility of my
“ heart. At sixteen to languish without hope
“ in cold indifference, and to see at least a
“ score of years waste away without pleasure,
“ which might have been delicious ! I say a
“ score at least, and it is not wanting to tire
“ the world, to be content to renounce it be-
“ fore forty years of age. Cruel family ! was
“ it for you that I took a husband ? You chose
“ me an honest man ; a rare present you made
“ me ! To be dull with an honest man, and
“ to be dull all one’s life ! very hard, in-
“ deed !”

This discontent soon degenerated into peevishness on the part of Lucilia, and Lisere thought he perceived at last, that she had taken an aversion to him. His friends displeased her, their company became troublesome to her, she received them with a coolness sufficient to keep
them

them at a distance. The Marquis could no longer dissemble. "Madam," said he to Lucilia, "the end of marriage is to make people happy; we are not so together, and it is in vain to pique ourselves on a constancy which restrains us. Our fortune puts us in a condition of doing without each other, and of resuming that liberty of which we imprudently made a mutual sacrifice. Live by yourself, I will live by myself. I ask towards me only that decency and regard which you owe to yourself." "With all my heart, Sir," replied Lucilia with the coldness of disgust; and from that moment every thing was settled that Madam might have her equipage, her table, her domestics, in one word, a separate maintenance.

Lucilia's suppers soon became some of the most brilliant in Paris. Her company was sought by all the handsome women and men of gallantry. But there was a necessity for Lucilia's having some particular, and who should engage her first, it was observed, had the only hard task! In the mean time she enjoyed the homage of a brilliant set; and her heart, yet irresolute, seemed to suspend her choice only to render it more flattering. She thought at last she saw the person who would determine it. At the approach of the Count de Blamzé, all the pretenders to her lowered their tone. He was,

of

of the whole court, the most to be dreaded by a young woman. It was agreed, that there was no resisting him, and so they spared themselves the trouble. He was beautiful as the day, presented himself with grace, spoke little, but extremely well; and if he said common things, he rendered them interesting by the most pleasing sound of voice, and the most beautiful look in the world. They could not say that Blamzé was a fop, his foppery had so much dignity. A modest haughtiness formed his character; he decided with the gentlest air in the world, and the most Laconic tone: he listened to contradictions with good-humour, replied to them only with a smile; and if they pressed him to explain himself, he smiled still and kept silence, or repeated what he had said. Never did he combat the opinion of another, never did he take any trouble to give a reason for his own: it was the most attentive politeness, and the most decisive presumption, that had ever yet been seen united in a young man of quality.

This assurance had something commanding in it, which rendered him the oracle of taste, and the legislator of fashion. They were never sure of being right in the choice of a suit, or the colour of a carriage, till Blamzé had approved it by a glance. *It is excellent, it is handsome*, were the precious words from his mouth; and his silence a dead warrant. The despotism

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of his opinion extended even over beauty, talents, wit and graces. In a circle of women, she whom he had honoured with a particular attention was that instant in vogue.

Blamzé's reputation had gone before him to Lucilia's; but the deference which even his rivals paid, redoubled the esteem she had conceived for him. She was dazzled with his beauty, and still more surprised at his modesty. He presented himself with the most respectful air, seated himself in the lowest place, but all looks were soon directed towards him. His dress was the model of taste: all the young people who surrounded him studied it with a scrupulous attention. His laces, his embroidery, his manner of dressing his head, were all examined: they writ down the names of his tradespeople and workmen. "It is strange," said they, "we see these designs, these colours, no where but with him." Blamzé confessed modestly that it cost him very little trouble. "Industry," said he, "is at its highest perfection; you need but to enlighten and direct it." He took a pinch of snuff as he said these words, and his box excited new curiosity; it was, however, the work of a young artist whom Blamzé drew out of oblivion. They asked him the price of every thing; he replied with a smile, that he knew the price of none of them; and the women whispered to each other in the

ear

ear the name of her who was charged with these details.

“ I am ashamed, Madam,” said Blamzé to Lucilia, “ that these trifles should take up an attention which ought to centre in a more interesting object. Pardon me if I listen to the frivolous questions of these young men: never did complaisance cost me so dear. I hope,” added he in a low voice, “ that you will permit me to come and make myself amends in some more tranquil moment.” “ I shall be very glad to see you,” replied Lucilia blushing; and by her blushes, and the tender smile with which Blamzé accompanied a most respectful bow, the assembly judged that it would not be long before the intrigue came to a conclusion. Lucilia, who did not see the consequence of a few words said in the ear, and who did not think that she had made an assignation, scarce paid any attention to the looks of meaning which the women cast on each other, and to the light railleries which escaped the men. She delivered herself up insensibly to her own reflections, and was quite grave the whole evening. They often turned the conversation on Blamzé; all the company spoke well of him: his rivals talked of him with esteem; Lucilia’s rivals spoke of him with complaisance. No body was more genteel, more gallant, more respectful, and of twenty wo-

I 2 men,

men, on whose account he had reason to pride himself, not one had any reason to complain. Lucilia became attentive : nothing escaped her : “ Twenty women ! ” said she within herself, “ that is much : but need we be surpris’d at it ? He seeks one who may be worthy to fix him, and capable of fixing herself.”

She hoped the next day that he would come early, and before the crowd of visitors : she waited for him, she grew uneasy, he came not, she was out of temper ; he writ, she read his billet, and her ill-humour ceased. He was distracted to lose the most agreeable moments of his life. Some impertinents had broke in upon him, he would have made his escape ; but these impertinents were people of rank. It was not in his power to be happy ’till the next day ; but he beseeched Lucilia to receive him early, “ to abridge,” said he, “ by a few hours, the “ cruel weariness of absence.” The company came as usual, and Lucilia received them with a coldness at which they were piqued. “ We “ shall not have Blamzé this evening,” said Clarissa with a disconsolate air ; “ he goes to “ sup at Araminta’s little box.” At these words Lucilia turned pale, and the gaiety which reigned around her only served to redouble the grief which she endeavoured to dissemble. Her first emotion was, not to see the perfidious man more. But Clarissa wanted, perhaps,

perhaps, either out of malice or jealousy, to impute a wrong to him of which he was not guilty. It was after all engaging herself to nothing, to see him once more; and before condemning him, it was just to hear him.

While she was yet at her toilette, Blamzé arrives in an undress, but the most elegant undress in the world. Lucilia was a little surprised to see a man whom she scarce knew appear in a deshabille; yet if he had given himself time to dress, perhaps she would have been sorry for it. But he said so many handsome things to her on the freshness of her complexion, the beauty of her hair, the brilliancy of her morning appearance, that she had not the courage to complain. However Araminta did not go out of her head; but it would not have been decent to appear jealous so soon; and one reproach might betray her. She contented herself with asking him what he had done with himself the evening before.—“What did I do with my-

“self! do I know myself? O, how trouble-

“some the world is! How happy are we in

“being forgotten and far from the crowd, in

“being to one’s self, and given up to the

“person we love! Follow my advice, Lu-

“cilia, get out of this whirlwind that sur-

“rounds you: the more repose, the more li-

“berty as soon as we resign ourselves up to it.

“Now I have mentioned the whirlwind, what

"do you do with all these young fellows who
 "pay court to you? They dispute with each
 "other the conquest of you: have you vouch-
 "safed to make a choice?" The easy famili-
 arity of Blamzé had at first astonished Lucilia;
 this question entirely confounded her. "I am
 "impertinent, perhaps?" resumed Blamzé,
 who perceived it. "Not at all," replied Lu-
 cilia with gentleness; "I have nothing to
 "conceal, and I am not afraid that any body
 "should see through me. I amuse myself with
 "the levity of these giddy young fellows, but
 "not one of them seems to me worthy of a
 "serious attachment." Blamzé spoke of his
 rivals with indulgence, and thought that Lu-
 cilia judged too severely of them. "Cleon,
 "for example," said he, "has something
 "very amiable in him; he knows nothing as
 "yet; it is a pity, for he speaks well enough
 "of things which he is ignorant of, and he is
 "a proof to me that with wit one may dispense
 "with common sense. Clairfont is a coxcomb,
 "but it is the first fire of his age, and he only
 "wants to be disciplined by a woman who has
 "seen life. Pomblac's disposition pronounces
 "him a man of sentiment, and that simplicity
 "which looks so like silliness, would please
 "me well enough if I were a woman: some
 "coquette will make her advantage of him.
 "Little Linval is conceited, but when he has
 "been

“been supplanted five or six times, they will
“not be surpris’d to see him grown modest. At
“present,” continued Blamzé, “none of all
“these will suit you; we behold you, there-
“fore, free: what use do you make of your
“freedom?” “I endeavour to enjoy it,”
replied Lucilia. “That is mere childish-
“ness,” resumed the Count; “we never
“enjoy our freedom but in the moment when
“we renounce it, and we ought not to pre-
“serve it with care, but in order to lose it at
“a proper conveniency. You are young,
“you are handsome, do not flatter yourself
“with being long disengaged: if you will not
“re-sign your heart, it will resign itself; but
“among those who may pretend to it, it is of
“importance to make a right choice. As
“soon as you love, and even when you do not
“love, you will be beloved infallibly: that is
“not the point that makes me uneasy; but
“at your age women have need of finding in
“a lover a counsellor, a guide, a friend, a
“man formed by the custom of the world,
“and able to enlighten you in respect of the
“dangers you are going to run in it.” “A
“man, like yourself, for example,” said
Lucilia, in an ironical tone, and with a
sneering smile. “Yes indeed,” continued
Blamzé, “I should do pretty well for your
“purpose, were it not for all this multitude
“that

" that besieges me ; but how to disengage
 " myself from it ? " " Why do not disengage
 " yourself from it at all," replied Lucilia :
 " you would excite too many complaints, and
 " make me too many enemies." " As to
 " complaints," said the Count coldly, " I
 " am accustomed to them. As to enemies,
 " one never gives one's self the least concern
 " about them when one has cause to be satis-
 " fied, and the good sense to live for one's
 " self." " At my age," said Lucilia smiling,
 " we are still too timorous ; and though there
 " were nothing further to experience in it than
 " the despair of an Araminta, that alone would
 " make me tremble." " An Araminta ? " re-
 " plied Blamzé, without any emotion, " Ara-
 " minta is a good creature who hears reason,
 " and who does not despair : I see somebody
 " has been talking to you of her ; you shall
 " have the whole account of my connections
 " with her. Araminta is one of those beauties,
 " who seeing themselves on the decline, that
 " they may not fall into oblivion, and to re-
 " vive their expiring consequence, have need
 " from time to time to make some noise in the
 " world. She has engaged me to pay her some
 " small attentions, and to behave to her with
 " some warmth. It would not have been hand-
 " some to refuse her, I made myself subser-
 " vient to her views. In order to give the
 " more

“ more celebrity to our adventure, she has
“ thought proper to take a little box. It was
“ in vain that I represented to her that it was
“ not worth while for a month at most which
“ I had to bestow on her : the box was fur-
“ nished without my knowledge, and in the
“ handsomest manner : she made me promise,
“ and there lay the grand point, to sup with
“ her there with an air of mystery : yesterday
“ was the day appointed. Araminta, for the
“ greater secrecy, invited nobody there but
“ five of her female friends, and permitted me
“ to carry only the like number of my friends,
“ I went there then : I assumed an air of plea-
“ sure ; I was gallant, warm towards her : in
“ a word, I let all the guests go away, and did
“ not retire myself till half an hour after them :
“ this was all, in my opinion, that decorum
“ required ; accordingly Araminta was charm-
“ ed with me. It was sufficient to bring her
“ again into vogue ; and I may henceforth
“ take my leave of her whenever I please,
“ without having any reproach to fear. This,
“ Madam, is my manner of conducting my-
“ self. The reputation of a woman is as dear
“ to me as my own : I will tell you more ;
“ it costs me nothing to make a sacrifice to her
“ glory of my own vanity. The greatest mis-
“ fortune to a woman who sets up for a beau-
“ ty, is to be forsaken ; I never forsake them,
“ I leave

" I leave myself to be discharged, I pretend
 " even to be inconsolable at it, and it has
 " sometimes happened to me that I have shut
 " myself up three days successively without
 " seeing any body, in order to leave the lady
 " from whom I had detached myself all the
 " honours of the rupture. You see, beautiful
 " Lucilia, that the men are not all of them
 " as bad as they say, and that there are still
 " among us principles and morals."

Lucilia, who had read only the romances of
 time past, was not at all accustomed to this
 new stile, and her surprise redoubled at every
 word she heard. " What, Sir," said she, " is
 " that what you call principles and morals !"
 —" Yes, Madam, but this is rare, and the
 " singular reputation which my proceedings
 " have acquired me, does no great honour to
 " the rest of our youth. Upon honour, the
 " more I think on it, the more I wish for
 " your own interest, that you had some bo-
 " dy like me." " I flatter myself," said Lu-
 " cilia, " that I shall be treated as tenderly as
 " another, and that, at least, I shall not have
 " the shock of being forsaken."—" You are
 " merry, Madam ; but to be serious, you de-
 " serve a person who thinks, and knows how
 " to develop those qualities of heart and under-
 " standing, which I think I have discovered
 " in you. Lifere is a good man ; but he ne-

" ver

“ ver knew how to make the most of his wife ;
 “ and in general the desire of pleasing a husband is not strong enough, to induce a woman to give herself the trouble of being amiable to him to a certain degree. Happily he leaves you at your own pleasure ; and you would not be worthy of so reasonable a procedure, if you should lose the most precious time of your life in idolence or dissipation.”

“ I am not afraid,” said Lucilia, “ of falling into any of these excesses.”—“ We see however nothing else in the world.”—“ I know it well, Sir ; and that is the reason why I should be difficult in the choice, if I had any design of making one : for I think there is no excuse for an attachment but that it is solid and durable.”—“ What, Lucilia ! at your age would you pique yourself upon constancy ? Really if I thought so, I should be capable of committing a folly.”—“ And that folly would be”
 —“ To grow prudent, and attach myself in good earnest.”—“ Seriously ! would you have the courage ?”—“ Upon my credit, I am a little fearful of it, if you would have me say the truth.”—“ A strange declaration !”—“ It is a little ill expressed ; but I beg you will pardon me : it is the first in my life.”—“ The first, say you ?”—
 “ Yes,

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" Yes, Madam : hitherto they have had the
 " modesty to spare me the trouble of ma-
 " king advances ; but I see plainly that I grow
 " old."—" Well, Sir, for the novelty of the
 " thing, I pardon you this first essay : I will
 " do more still, I will confess to you, that
 " it cannot displease me."—" Really that is
 " happy ! do you give me leave to love you ! and
 " will you also do me the honour to love me ?"
 —" Ah ! that is another thing ; time shall
 " show me whether you deserve it."—" Look
 " at me, Lucilia."—" I do look at you."—
 " And do not you laugh !"—" What should
 " I laugh at ?"—" At your own answer. Do
 " you take me for a child ?"—" I talk reason-
 " ably to you, I think."—" And it is in order
 " to talk reasonably to me, that you have
 " done me the honour to grant me a *tête-à-*
 " *tête* ?"—" I did not think that in order to
 " be reasonable, we had need of witnesses ;
 " after all, what have I said to you, which
 " you ought not to have expected ? I find in
 " you graces, wit, an engaging and noble air."
 —" You are very good."—" But that is not
 " enough to merit my confidence, and to de-
 " termine my inclination."—" Not enough,
 " Madam ! excuse me a little. And what
 " need there more, if you please ?"—" A
 " more thorough knowledge of your temper,
 " a more intimate persuasion of your senti-
 " ments

“ments for me. I promise you nothing, I
“forbid myself nothing; you have every
“thing to hope, but nothing to claim: you
“are to consider whether that suits you.”—
“No price, without doubt, beautiful Lucilia,
“should be thought too dear to merit and
“obtain you: but seriously, would you have
“me renounce all the charms of the world to
“have my happiness depend on an uncertain
“contingency? I am, you know, and I am
“not conceited of it, I am the man the most
“sought after in all France; be it taste or
“fancy, it is no matter; it is her concern
“that should have me, though but for a time.”
“You are right,” said Lucilia, “I was unrea-
“sonable, and your moments are too precious.”
—“No, I confess to you seriously, that I am
“tired of being in fashion; I was looking
“out for an object that might fix me; I have
“found it; I attach myself to it: nothing
“can be more fortunate; but still this ought
“not to be to no purpose. You would have
“time for reflexion; I give you twenty-four
“hours; I think that is very handsome, and
“I have never given so much before.” “My
“reflexions are too slow,” replied Lucilia,
“and you are too much in a hurry for us to
“agree on this point. I am young, perhaps
“have sensibility: but my age and sensibility
“shall never engage me in an imprudent step.

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“ I have told you, if my heart yields, time,
 “ proofs, reflexion, the pleasing habitude of
 “ confidence and esteem, will have decided its
 “ choice.”—“ But, madam, in good earnest
 “ now, do you think to find an amiable man
 “ sufficiently disengaged to lose his time in spin-
 “ ning out an intrigue? and do you yourself
 “ intend to pass your youth in consulting whe-
 “ ther you shall love or no?” “ I cannot tell,”
 replied Lucilia, “ whether I shall ever love,
 “ nor what time I shall employ in resolving
 “ upon it; but that time will not be lost, if
 “ it spares me regret.” “ I admire you, Ma-
 “ dam, I admire you,” said Blamzé, taking
 his leave; “ but I have not the honour to be
 “ of the ancient order of chivalry, and I did
 “ not come here so early to compose a romance
 “ with you.”

Lucilia, thunderstruck at the scene which
 she had just had with Blamzé, passed in a short
 time from astonishment to reflexion. “ Is this
 “ then,” said she, “ the man in vogue, the
 “ man amiable above all others? He conde-
 “ scends to think me handsome; and if he be-
 “ lieved me capable of constancy, he would
 “ be guilty of the folly of loving me in good
 “ earnest; but yet he has not time to wait
 “ till I have consulted myself. I must seize
 “ the moment of pleasing him, and deter-
 “ mine in twenty-four hours: he has never
 “ given

“ so much time before. Do the women
“ then humble themselves thus, and the men
“ thus prescribe them the conditions ! happily
“ he has made himself known to me. Under
“ that modest air which had seduced me, what
“ conceit, what presumption ! ah ! I see the
“ most mortifying evil to a woman is that of
“ loving a fop.”

The same day, after the opera, Lucilia's company being met together, Pomblac came to tell her, with an air of mystery, that she would have neither Blamzé nor Clairfont to sup with her. “ Very well,” said she, “ I require not of my friends any assiduity that constrains them : there are even such people whose assiduity would constrain me.” “ If Blamzé be of that number,” replied Pomblac frankly, “ Clairfont has delivered you from him at least for some time.”—“ How so ?”—“ Do not be frightened : all is very well over.”—“ How, Sir, what is over !”—“ After the opera, the curtain being dropt, we were on the stage, and, according to custom, hearing Blamzé deciding on every thing. Having given us his opinion on the singing, the dancing, and the decorations, he asked us, if we were to sup at the little Marchioness's ? (pardon me, Madam, it was you he spoke of.) We replied Yes. “ I shall not be there,” said he ; “ we are in
K 2 “ the

"the pouts since this morning." I asked
 "what might be the cause of these pouts?
 "Blamzé told us, that you had made him an
 "affignation ; that he had failed in it ; that you
 "were piqued at it ; that he had made up
 "that this morning ; that you played the
 "child ; that he was in a hurry to conclude ;
 "that you had demanded time for reflexion ;
 "and that, tired out with your *ifs* and your
 "*buts*, he had left you in the lurch. He
 "told us, that you wanted to set off with a
 "serious engagement ; that he had some in-
 "clination towards it ; but that he had not
 "time enough on his hands ; that, on calcu-
 "lating the strength of the citadel, he had
 "judged that it might sustain a siege ; but that
 "nothing would do for him but a surprise. "It
 "is an exploit that may suit some of you,"
 added he ; "you are young, it is the time when
 "one loves to encounter difficulties, in order
 "to overcome them ; but I forewarn you that
 "virtue is her fort, and sensibility her weak
 "part : every thing was concluded, if I had
 "taken the trouble to play the passionate
 "lover." "I was fully persuaded that he lied,"
 resumed the young man ; "but I had the
 "prudence to be silent. Clairfont was not
 "as patient as I : he signified to him, that he
 "did not believe one word of his story : at this
 "declaration they went out together. I fol-
 lowed

“lowed them. Clairfont received a wound.”—
“And Blamzé . . . ?”—“Blamzé has two,
“of which he will not recover without some
“difficulty. While I helped him to get into
“his coach, “If Clairfont, said he, “knows
“how to make an advantage of this ad-
“venture, he will carry Lucilia. A wo-
“man defends herself but ill against a man
“who defends her so well. Tell him that I
“dispense with this being a secret to her ;
“it is just that she should know what she
“owes to her knight.”

Lucilia had all the difficulty in the world to conceal the trouble and consternation which this story gave her. She feigned a head-ache and it is well known that a head-ache, in a handsome woman, is a civil way of dismissing impertinents. They left her alone at their rising from table.

Delivered up to herself, Lucilia could not console herself for having been the subject of a duel, which would make her the town talk. She was strongly touched by the warmth with which Clairfont had revenged the affront offered her; but what an humiliation to her if this adventure should make a noise, and Lisere should be informed of it? Happily the secret was kept. Pomblac and Clairfont made a point of saving Lucilia's honour ; and Blamzé being cured of his wounds, was far from

ing of an imprudence by which he had been so severely punished. It will be asked perhaps; how a man till then so discreet came all of a sudden to cease to be so? It is because we are under less temptation to publish favours which we obtain, than to avenge ourselves for the rigours we undergo. This first indiscretion had like to have cost him his life. He was for a month on the brink of the grave. Clairfont had less difficulty to get his wound cured, and Lucilia saw him again with a tenderness hitherto unknown to him. If we attach ourselves to any one who has exposed his life for us, we attach ourselves as naturally to the person for whom we have exposed our life; and such services perhaps are stronger ties to the person who has performed them, than to the party for whom they were performed. Clairfont then became desperately in love with Lucilia; but the more she owed him in return, the less he dared to require any thing of her; he found a sensible pleasure in being generous, and he ceased being so if he availed himself of the rights he had acquired to Lucilia's gratitude: accordingly he was more timorous in regard to her, than if he had merited nothing; but Lucilia read his soul, and this delicacy took the strongest hold of her. In the mean time, the fear of appearing to want gratitude, or the dread of carrying it too far, made her dissemble her

her knowledge of the intelligence Pomblac had given her ; thus the good will she testified towards Clairfont appeared free and disinterested, and he was so much the more affected by it. Their mutual inclination every day made a sensible progress. They sought one another with their eyes, conferred with intimacy, listened to each other with complaisance, gave one another an account of their proceedings, in reality, without affectation, and, as it were, for the sake of saying something ; but with so much exactness, that they knew, almost to a minute, the hour at which they were to see each other again. Clairfont insensibly became more familiar, and Lucilia less reserved. Nothing remained but to explain themselves ; for which purpose there was no need of those marvellous incidents which love sometimes sends to the assistance of bashful lovers. One day that they were alone, Lucilia let her fan drop ; Clairfont picks it up, and presents it to her ; she receives it with a pleasing smile ; that smile inspires the lover with the courage to kiss her hand : that hand was the most beautiful hand in the world, and from the moment that Clairfont's lips were applied to it, she was unable to withdraw it. Lucilia, in her emotion, made a slight effort to draw back her hand, he opposed a gentle violence, and his eyes, tenderly fixed on Lucilia's

Lucilia's eyes, entirely disarmed her. Their looks had expressed every thing before their tongues interfered ; and the mutual confession of their love was made and returned in two words. " I breathe, we love," said Clairfont, intoxicated with joy. " Alas ! yes, " we do love," replied Lucilia, with a profound sigh ; " it is no longer time to deny it. " But remember that I am bound by duties : " those duties are inviolable, and, if I am " dear to you, they will be sacred."

Lucilia's inclination was not one of those fashionable passions which stifle shame in their infancy, and Clairfont respected it too much to take advantage of it as a weakness. Transported with being loved, he for a long time confined his desires to the delicious possession of a heart pure, virtuous and faithful. " How " little we love," said he to himself in his delirium, " when we are not made happy by " the single pleasure of loving ! Who was " the stupid savage who first branded with " the name of rigour that resistance which " timid modesty opposes to wild desires ? Is " there, beautiful Lucilia, is there a denial " which your looks would not soften ? Can I " complain when you smile upon me ? And " has my soul any wishes still to form, when " my eyes draw from yours that heavenly voluptuousness with which you intoxicate all
" my

“ senses ? Far be from us, I consent to it,
 “ all those pleasures followed by regrets, which
 “ would trouble the serenity of your life. I
 “ respect your virtue as much as you yourself
 “ cherish it, and I should never pardon my-
 “ self the having caused any remorse to spring
 “ up in the bosom of innocence itself.” Sen-
 timents so heroick charmed Lucilia ; and Clair-
 font, more tender every day, was every day
 more beloved, more happy, and more worthy
 to be so. But at length the railleries of his
 friends, and the suspicions they excited in him
 with respect to that virtue which he adored,
 embittered his happiness. He became gloomy,
 uneasy, jealous ; every thing vexed him, every
 thing gave him umbrage. Lucilia every day
 perceived her chain become closer and heavier,
 every day there were new complaints to hear
 new reproaches to undergo. Every man that
 she received with civility was a rival whom she
 must banish. The first sacrifices that he re-
 quired were made without opposition ; he de-
 manded new ones, he obtained them ; he
 wanted more still, she was weary of obeying
 him. Clairfont imagined he saw in Lucilia’s
 impatience an invincible attachment to the
 connexions which he prohibited ; and that
 love, at first so delicate and submissive, be-
 came fierce and tyrannical. Lucilia was ter-
 rified ; she sought to appease him, but to no
 purpose.

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purpose. "I will not believe," said the imperious Clairfont, "I will not believe that you love me till you live for me alone, as I do for you. What! if I possess, if I fill your soul, what do you do with this troublesome crowd? Ought it to cost you any thing to banish what afflicts me? Would it cost me any pain to renounce every thing that would displease you? What do I say? Is it not a continual violence that I do myself to see any thing but Lucilia? Would to heaven we were freed from this crowd, which besieges you, and which deprives me every moment either of your looks or your thoughts. The solitude that so terrifies you would complete all my wishes. Are not our souls of the same nature? Or the love which you think you feel, is it not the same that I feel? You complain that I demand sacrifices of you! Require, Lucilia, require in your turn; chuse the most painful, the most grievous trials; you shall see whether I hesitate. There is no connexion which I would not break, no effort which I would not make; or rather I should not make any. The pleasure of pleasing you will make me amends, will serve instead of every thing; and what they call denials would be to me enjoyments." "You think so, Clairfont," replied the tender and ingenuous

ingenuous Lucilia ; “ but you deceive yourself. Each of these denials is but little ; “ but altogether make up a great deal. It “ is the continuance of them that is tiresome : “ you have made me know by experience, “ that no complaisance is inexhaustible.” While she spoke thus, Clairfont’s eyes, sparkling with impatience, were sometimes turned up to heaven, and sometimes fixed on her. “ Believe me,” continued Lucilia, “ the “ sacrifices of true love are made in the heart, “ and under the veil of mystery : self-love “ alone demands publick ones : to that victory is little ; it aspires to the honours of a “ triumph ; that is what you exact.”

“ What a cold analysis,” cried he, “ and “ what vain metaphysicks ! Love, to be sure, “ reasons thus ! I love you, Madam ; nothing, to my misfortune, is truer ; I would “ sacrifice a thousand lives to please you ; and “ whatever may be this sentiment which you “ call self-love, it detaches me from the whole world to deliver myself up solely to you ; but “ in abandoning myself thus, I would possess you in the same manner. Cleon, Linval, Pomblac, all these are sufficient to “ make me uneasy : I cannot answer for myself. After this, if you love me, nothing “ ought to be more precious to you than my “ repose ; and my uneasiness, were it even a “ folly,

“folly, you ought to dissipate. But why do
 “I say a folly? You render my alarms and
 “my suspicions but too reasonable. And how
 “should I be easy, when I see that every one
 “who comes near you engages you more than
 “myself?”

“Ah, Sir, what acknowledgements do I
 “owe you!” said Lucilia with a sigh: “you
 “make me see the depth of the abyss into
 “which love was going to plunge me. Yes,
 “I see that there is no slavery comparable to
 “that which a jealous lover imposes.”—“I,
 “Madam, do I make you a slave? Have not
 “you even an absolute empire over me? Do
 “not you do what you please with me?”—
 “Enough, Sir: I have suffered a long time;
 “I flattered myself; you now draw me out of
 “my illusion, and nothing can lead me into
 “it again. Be my friend if you can be so:
 “it is the only title that remains to you with
 “me.”—“Ah, cruel woman, would you
 “have my death?”—“I want nothing but
 “your ease and my own.”—“You over-
 “whelm me. What is my crime?”—“Lov-
 “ing yourself too well, and not esteeming me
 “enough.”—“Ah! I swear to you.”—
 “Swear nothing: your jealousy is a vice in
 “your disposition, and the disposition never
 “corrects itself. I know you, Clairfont, I
 “begin to dread you, and cease to love you.

“This

" This very moment I see my frankness makes
" you desperate ; but of two punishments I
" chuse the shortest ; and by taking away
" from you the right of being jealous, I create
" you the happy necessity of ceasing to be so."
" I know you in my turn," replied Clairfont
with a stifled rage : " the delicacy of a sen-
" sible soul ill agrees with the levity of yours ;
" it is a Blamzé that you must have for a
" lover, and I was a fool to take it ill"
" Go no farther," interrupted Lucilia ; " I
" know all that I owe to you ; but I retire
" to spare you the shame of having reproach-
" ed me with it."

Clairfont went off in a rage, and fully re-
solved never more to revisit a woman whom he
had so tenderly loved, and who had dismissed
him with so much inhumanity.

Lucilia, restored to herself, found herself,
as it were, relieved from a burthen that over-
whelmed her. But, on one side, the dangers
of love, which she had just experienced, on
the other, the sad prospect of everlasting indif-
ference, suffered her to hope hereafter for no-
thing but cruel disquietudes, or insupportable
dullness. " What," said she, " has heaven
" given me a sensible heart only to make me
" the sport of a fop, the victim of a tyrant,
" or the gloomy companion of a kind of phi-
" losopher, neither affected nor moved at any
" thing ?"

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“ thing ?” These reflections plunged her into a languor which she was not able to conceal : her company perceived it, and became soon as melancholy as herself. The women, to whom her house was a rendezvous, were alarmed at it. “ She is lost,” said they, “ if we draw her not out of this sad state ; she is disgusted with the world : she loves nothing but solitude ; the symptoms of her melancholy become every day more terrible, and, by the force of some violent passion which agitates her, it is to be feared that she will fall again into the power of her husband. Do we know no body to turn this young head ? Blanzé himself set about it the wrong way, and did not succeed : as to Clairfont, on whom we depended, he is a little fool who loves like a madman ; no wonder she should be affronted. “ Hold,” said Cephisa, after being lost in thought for some time ; “ Lucilia has a romantic way of thinking ; she must have something in the fairy taste, and the magnificent Dorimon is exactly the man that suits her. She will grow mad for him, I am sure ; let us engage him only to go and invite her to supper at his fine country-house : I will take upon me to pre-instruct him, and give him his lesson.” The party was accepted, and Dorimon made acquainted with it.

Dorimon

Dorimon was the man in the world who knew best who were the most able artists, who received them with the best grace, and recompensed them the most liberally; accordingly he had the reputation of a connoisseur, and a man of taste.

If, some centuries hence, this tale should be read, they may imagine it forged at pleasure, and the habitation I am going to describe may pass for a fairy castle; but it is not my fault if the luxury of our times comes into competition with the marvellous of fables, and if, in the representation of our follies, probability should be wanting to truth.

On the rich banks of the Seine arises, in form of an amphitheatre, a small eminence exposed to the first rays of the morning, and the ardent fires of noon. The forest which crowns it defends it from the chilling blast of the North, and the watery influence of the West. From the summit of the hill fall in cascades three copious springs of water purer than the crystal, which the industrious hand of art has conducted by a thousand windings over green slopes. Sometimes these waters divide themselves, and glide along in mæanders; sometimes they re-unite in basons, in which the heavens behold themselves with delight; then they precipitate themselves, and pour along, dashing against rocks cut out into

grottos, in which the chisle has imitated the fanciful varieties of Nature. The Seine, which forms a bow at the foot of the hill, receives them into his peaceable bosom; and their fall recalls to our minds those fabulous times in which the nymphs of the fountains descended into the humid palace of the rivers, to temper the ardours of youth and love.

An ingenious whimsicalness seems to have designed the gardens watered by these streams. All sides of this smiling scene agree without sameness: the very symmetry is striking: the eye roves without lassitude, and reposes without dullness. A noble elegance, a richness well managed, a bold, and yet delicate taste, have been employed in embellishing these gardens. Nothing is neglected, nothing forced or laboured with too much art. The concourse of simple beauties forms all its magnificence; and the equilibrium of masses, joined to the variety of forms, produces that beautiful harmony which forms the delight of beholders.

Groves ornamented with statues, lattice-work fashioned into arbours and bowers, decorate all the known gardens; but these riches, displayed without understanding and taste, generally excite nothing more than a cold and dull admiration, soon attended with satiety. Here the disposition and connection of the parts forms, of a thousand different sensations, but
one

one continued enchantment. The second object that is discovered adds to the pleasure which the first has raised ; and both one and the other are still further embellished by the charms of the new object that succeeds, without effacing them.

This delicious landscape is terminated by a palace of airy architecture ; the Corinthian order itself has less elegance and lightness. Here the columns imitated the palm trees united in arbours. The root of the vault formed of palms composes a chapter more natural, and as noble as the vase of Callimachus. These palms are interwoven among each other in the interstices of the columns, and their natural wreathings concealed from the deceived eye the heaviness of the entablature. As these columns are sufficient for the weight of the edifice, they leave a continued transparency to the walls, by means of chasms contrived with art. We see none of those redoubled roofs which crush our modern architecture ; and the frightful irregularity of our Gothic chimneys is lost in the crown-work.

The interior luxury of the palace is suitable to the magnificence without. It is, in short, the temple of the arts and of taste. The pencil, the chisel, the graving-tool ; every thing that industry has invented for the delicacies of life, is there displayed with a discreet

profusion; and the Pleasures, the daughters of Opulence, there flatter the soul through all the senses.

Lucilia was dazzled with so much magnificence; the first evening appeared to her a dream: it was nothing but one continued scene of shows and feastings, of which she plainly perceived herself was the divinity. The earnestness, the vivacity, the gallantry with which Dorimon did the honours of this beautiful dwelling, the changes of scene which he produced with one single look, the absolute empire which he seemed to exercise over the arts and pleasures, recalled to Lucilia's imagination every thing that she had read of the most celebrated enchanters. She dared not trust her eyes, and even thought herself enchanted. If Dorimon had availed himself of the intoxication into which she was plunged, the dream perhaps had ended after the manner of modern romances. But Dorimon was merely gallant; and all he had the courage to permit himself to do, was to ask Lucilia to come sometimes and embellish his hermitage; for so he called this mansion.

Lucilia's companions had observed her with attention. The most experienced judged that Dorimon was too much taken up with his magnificence, and not enough with his happiness. "He ought," said they, "to have
" seized

“ seized the first moment of surprise : it is a
“ kind of transport which we do not feel
“ twice.”

In the mean time, Lucilia's head being filled with all that she had just seen, she formed to herself the most wonderful idea of Dorimon himself. So much gallantry bespoke an imagination brisk and sprightly, a cultivated genius, a delicate taste, and a lover, if ever there was one, wholly taken up with the care of pleasing. This portrait, though a little too flattering, was not wholly unlike. Dorimon was yet young, of an engaging figure, and a most joyous temper. His wit was all in fallies ; he had in his way of thinking little warmth, but much refinement. No body said more gallant things ; but he had not the gift of enforcing them : every body loved to hear him, but no body believed him. He was the most seducing man in the world for a coquette, the least dangerous to a woman of sentiment.

She consented to see him again at his own house, and this gave occasion to new entertainments. But in vain had the gallantry of Dorimon re-assembled there all the pleasures which she had given birth to, in vain were these pleasures varied every instant with as much art as taste : Lucilia was at first slightly moved, soon after satiated ; and before the close of the day, she conceived that it was possible

possible to grow dull in this delicious abode. Dorimon, who never quitted her, exerted all the talents of pleasing; he held her in discourse on a thousand ingenious subjects, he mingled also some soft things with them; but still this was not what she had conceived. She thought to find a god, and Dorimon was but a man; the pomp of his house eclipsed him, proportions were not observed; and Dorimon, while he surpassed himself, was all the while inferior to the idea which every thing around him gave of him.

He was very far from suspecting the injury which this comparison did him in the imagination of Lucilia, and he waited only one happy moment to avail himself of his advantages. After the concert, and before supper, he led her, as it were by chance, into a solitary closet, where she might go, he said, and ruminate, when she should have any moments of pouting. The door opens, and Lucilia sees her image reflected a thousand times in the dazzling pier-glasses; the voluptuous paintings with which the pannels were covered, multiplied themselves around her. Lucilia, admiring herself, thought she beheld the goddesses of Loves. At this sight an exclamation of surprise and admiration escaped her, and Dorimon seized the instant of this sudden emotion. "Reign here, there is your throne," said he
to

to her, showing her a sofa, which the hand of fairies had sown with flowers. "My throne!" said Lucilia, seating herself, and with a tone of gaiety; "well, ay, I like it pretty well, and I find myself the queen of a mighty pretty people." She spoke of the multitude of Loves which she perceived in the glasses. Amidst these subjects, "Will you condescend, Madam, to admit me?" said Dorimon with ardour, and throwing himself at her feet. "Ah! as to you," said she with a serious air, "you are no child;" and at these words she would have got up, but he retained her with a strong hand, and the effort she made to escape rendered him still bolder. "Where am I then?" said she with terror: "let me go, let me go, I say, or my cries" These words awed him. Excuse, Madam," said he, "an imprudence, of which you are yourself in some measure the cause. To come here *tête à tête*, and repose yourself on this sofa, as you have done, is giving to understand, according to the received custom, that a little violence would not be ill taken. With you I see plainly that it means nothing; we misunderstood each other." "Oh! very much so," said Lucilia, going out in a rage; and Dorimon followed her, a little confounded at his mistake. Happily their absence had
not

not been long enough to give time for slander to speak ill of it. Lucilia, dissembling her perturbation, told the company that she had just been seeing a very fine cabinet. They ran in a body there; and their exclamations of admiration were only interrupted by the coming in of supper.

The sumptuousness of this feast seemed to improve still upon all the pleasures that they had tasted. But Dorimon in vain took upon himself; he had not that gaiety which was so natural to him; and Lucilia replied to the gallant things they addressed to her in order to draw her out of her reverie, only by a forced smile, with which good-breeding endeavours to disguise ill-humour.

"There," said her friends to her, on going home with her, "there now is a man who suits you: with him life is a continual enchantment; it appears as if all the pleasures obeyed his voice: the moment he commands, they arrive in troops."

"There are some," said Lucilia coldly, "which cannot be commanded: they are above riches; we find them only in our hearts." "Upon my word, my dear," said Cephisa to her, "you are very difficult." "Yes, Madam, very difficult," replied she with a sigh: and during the rest of the journey they kept a profound silence. "This is nothing but a hand-
some

"some woman spoilt," said her friends at quitting her. "Yet if her whims were cheerful ones, we might amuse ourselves with them; but nothing in the world is more gloomy. It was worth while indeed to separate from her husband, to be a prude to the rest of the world!"

"Is this then the world so much boasted of?" said Lucilia, on her side: "I have passed rapidly through every thing agreeable in it: what have I found? a coxcomb, a jealous lover, a vain man, who arrogates to himself, as so many charms, his gardens, his palace, and his entertainments, and who thinks that the severest virtue can ask nothing better than to yield to him. Ah! how I hate those makers of romances, who have lulled me with their fables! My imagination filled with a thousand chimeras, I thought my husband insipid; and yet he is worth more than all I have seen. He is plain; but is not his plainness a thousand times preferable to the vain pretensions of a Blamzé? He is temperate in his affections, and what would become of me if he were violent and passionate like Clairfont? He loved me little, but he loved only me; and if I had been reasonable, he loved me enough to make me happy. I had not with him those pompous and noisy pleasures

" fures which intoxicate us at first, and soon
 " after cloy us : but his complaisance, his
 " sweetness, his delicate attentions, furnished
 " me every moment with pleasures, the most
 " pure and solid, if I had but known how to
 " relish them. Fool that I was ! I pursued
 " illusions, and fled happiness itself : it is plac-
 " ed in the silence of the passions, the equi-
 " librium and repose of the soul. But alas !
 " it is a fine time to acknowledge my errors,
 " when they have made me lose the friend-
 " ship, the confidence, perhaps the esteem of
 " my husband. Thank heaven, I have no-
 " thing to reproach myself with but the indis-
 " cretions of my age. But is Lisere obliged
 " to believe me in this point, and would he
 " vouchsafe to hear me ? Ah ! how difficult
 " is it to return to one's duty, when we have
 " once abandoned it ! difficult ! and why ?
 " who hinders me ? the dread of being hum-
 " bled ? But Lisere is a good man ; and if he
 " has spared me in my errors, would he dis-
 " tress me in my reformation ? I have but to
 " detach myself from a pernicious society, to
 " live at home, with such of my female friends
 " as my husband respects, and whom I can
 " see without blushing. All the while that
 " he has seen me delivered up to the world,
 " he has never come near me ; but if he sees
 " me restored to myself, he will condescend
 " per-

“ perhaps to recall me to him ; and if his
 “ heart be not restored to me, the only con-
 “ solation that remains to me, is that of ren-
 “ dering myself worthy of it : I shall be at
 “ least reconciled to myself, if I cannot be so
 “ to my husband.”

Lisere, full of grief, had kept sight of her
 through all her whirl of company : he depended
 on the justness of her way of thinking, and the
 probity of her soul. “ She will perceive,” said
 he, “ the frivolousness of the pleasures which
 “ she seeks, the folly of the women, the va-
 “ nity of the men, the falsity of both ; and,
 “ if she returns virtuous, her virtue will be
 “ but the more confirmed by the dangers it
 “ has run. But will she have escaped all the
 “ shelves that surround her, the charms of
 “ flattery, the snares of seduction, the attrac-
 “ tions of pleasure ? We despise the world when
 “ we know it thoroughly ; but we give our-
 “ selves up to it before we know it, and the
 “ heart is frequently lost before reason en-
 “ lightens it. O Lucilia !” cried he, looking at
 the portrait of his wife, which in solitude was
 his only conversation, “ O Lucilia ! you were
 “ so deserving of being happy ! and I flattered
 “ myself that you would be so with me. Alas !
 “ perhaps some one of those handsome cor-
 “ rupters, who form at once the ornament and
 “ misfortunes of the world, is at this very

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“ time employed in seducing her innocence,
 “ and is bent upon her defeat, merely for the
 “ sake of the pleasure of boasting of it. What,
 “ would my wife’s shame raise an eternal bar-
 “ rier between us ! It would no longer be
 “ permitted me to live with her, from whom
 “ death alone ought to separate me ! I have
 “ betrayed her in abandoning her. Heaven
 “ had chose me for the guardian of her impru-
 “ dent and frail youth. I have consulted only
 “ custom, and I have been struck only by the
 “ frightful idea of being hated as a tyrant.”

While Lisere floated thus in this cruel un-
 certainty, Lucilia was not less agitated between
 the desire of returning to him, and the dread
 of being repulsed. Twenty times had she risen,
 after passing the night in sighs and tears, with
 the resolution of going to wait his waking, in
 order to throw herself at his feet, and ask his
 pardon. But a shame, well known to sensible
 and delicate souls, had still withheld her foot-
 steps. If Lisere did not despise her, if he still
 preserved any feeling for her, any esteem ;
 from the time when she had broken off with
 her parties, from the time that she had lived
 retired and solitary, how came it that he had
 never vouchsafed to see her even once ? Every
 day, as he went by, he enquired after his
 lady’s health ; she heard of it ; she hoped that
 at last he would ask to see her ; each day this
 hope

hope was renewed ; she expected, all trembling, the moment of Lifere's calling ; she drew as near as possible, in order to listen to him, and retired in tears, after having heard him ask, as he went along, *How does my lady do ?* She could have wished to have Lifere informed of her repentance, of her return to herself ; " but to whom can I trust ? " said she : " to " friends ! is there one of them faithful " enough, discreet enough, wise enough, for " so delicate an interposition ? Some of them " might have the talents, but had not the " zeal ; and others had the zeal, but not the " talents : besides, it is so hard to trust to " others what we dare not confess ourselves ! " A letter ; but what shall I write to " him ? general expressions would not touch " him, and particulars are so humiliating ! " At length a thought came into her head, by which her delicacy and sensibility were equally satisfied. Lifere had absented himself for two days, and Lucilia seized the opportunity of his absence to execute her design.

Lifere had an old servant, whom Lucilia saw melting into tears at the moment of their separation, and whose zeal, honesty, and discretion, were well known to her. " Am- " brose," said she to him, " I have a favour " to ask of you." " Ah ! Madam," said the good man, " command me ; I am yours, with

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"all my soul: would to God that you and
 "my master loved one another as I love you!
 "I know not which of you is wrong; but I
 "am sorry for you both: it would be de-
 "lightful to see you together, and I see no-
 "thing here which does not give me sorrow,
 "ever since you have been on ill terms."
 "It is perhaps my fault," said Lucilia, hu-
 "miliated; "but, my dear Ambrose, the evil
 "is not without remedy: only do what I
 "shall tell you. You know that my portrait
 "is in your master's chamber."---"Oh! yes,
 "Madam, he knows it very well too; for he
 "shuts himself up sometimes with it for whole
 "days: it is all his consolation. He looks
 "at it, he talks to it, he sighs most pitifully;
 "and I see plainly that the poor gentleman
 "would still much rather converse with you
 "than with your picture."---"You tell me
 "very comfortable news, my dear Ambrose;
 "but go and take away that portrait private-
 "ly, and chuse, in order to bring it me, a
 "time when you may not be seen by any
 "body."---"I, Madam, deprive my master
 "of all that he holds dearest in the world!
 "rather ask my life." "Be assured," re-
 "plied Lucilia, "my design is not to deprive
 "him of it. To-morrow evening thou shalt
 "come and fetch it, to put it in its place a-
 "gain: I will only beg of you to say nothing

"my husband." "Very well," said Ambrose, "I know that you are goodness itself, and you would not now at the latter end of my life give me the mortification of having made my master uneasy." The faithful Ambrose executed Lucilia's order. She had in her portrait the tender and languishing air which was natural to her; but her look was serene, and her hair set with flowers. She sent for her painter, ordered him to draw her with her hair dishevelled, and to paint the tears trickling from her eyes. As soon as her idea was carried into execution, the picture was replaced in Lifere's apartment. He comes into it, and his eyes are soon raised on the dear object. It is easy to conceive how great was his surprise. The dishevelled hair strikes him first: he draws near, and sees the tears flow: "Ah!" cried he, "ah Lucilia! are these the tears of repentance? Is that the sorrow of love?" He goes out transported, he flies to her, he seeks her with his eyes, and he finds her in the same situation as the picture had represented her. Immoveable for a moment, he eyes her with tenderness; and suddenly throwing himself at her feet, "Is it really true," said he, "that my wife is restored to me?" "Yes," said Lucilia, with sighs, "yes, if you think her still worthy of you?" "Can she have cease-

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“ed to be so,” replied Lisere, locking her in his arms. “No, my dear, be comforted : “ I know your soul, and I have never ceased “ to mourn and to esteem you. You would “ not return to me, if the world had been able “ to seduce you, and this voluntary return is “ the proof of your virtue.” “ Oh ! thank “ heaven,” said she, (her heart being eased by the tears which flowed in abundance from her eyes) “ thank heaven, I have no shame- “ ful weakness to blush at : I have been fool- “ ish, but not dishonest.” “ If I doubted it, “ would you now be in my bosom ?” replied Lisere ; and at these words but who can describe the transports of two sensible hearts, which, after having groaned under a cruel separation, were re-united for ever ? On learning their reconciliation, the family were filled with joy, and the good Ambrose said, his eyes swimming with tears, “ God be praised ! I “ shall now die content.”

From that day, the tender union of this pair serves as an example to all those of their age. The divorce has convinced them that the world had nothing that could make either of them amends ; and this is what I call a *Happy Divorce*.

ANNETE



ANNETE and LUBIN,

A TRUE STORY.

IF it be dangerous to tell every thing to children, it is more dangerous still to leave them in ignorance of every thing. There are grievous crimes according to the laws, which are not so in the eyes of nature; and we are now going to see into what an abyfs the latter leads innocence when she has a fillet over her eyes.

Annete and Lubin were the children of two sisters. These strict ties of blood ought to be incompatible with those of marriage. But Annete and Lubin had no suspicion that there were in the world other laws than the simple laws of nature. From the age of eight years they kept sheep together on the smiling banks of the Seine. They touched now on their sixteenth; but their youth differed not from infancy but by a warmer sentiment of their mutual friendship.

Annete beneath a plain country coif, bound back negligently her ebony hair. Two large
blue

blue eyes sparkled beneath her long eye-lashes, and expressed most innocently every thing which the dull eyes of our cold coquettes endeavour to express. Her rosy lips invited to be kissed. Her complexion, tanned by the sun, was enlivened by that light shade of purple which colours the down of the peach. Every part of her which the veils of modesty concealed from the rays of noon, effaced the whiteness of the lily : we thought we saw the head of a lively Brunette on the shoulders of a beautiful Blonde.

Lubin had that decisive, open and joyous air, which proclaims a free and contented mind. His looks was that of desire, his laugh the laugh of joy. When he burst out, he displayed teeth whiter than ivory. The freshness of his round cheeks invited the hand to pat them. Add to all this a nose in the air, a dimple in the chin, white silver locks, curled by the hand of Nature ; a genteel make, a deliberate pace, the frankness of the golden age, which suspects and blushes at nothing. This was the portrait of Annette's cousin.

Philosophy brings man back nearer to nature, and it is for this reason that instinct sometimes resembles it. I should not be surprised then if my shepherds should be imagined to be somewhat philosophical ; but I forewarn my readers that it is without their knowing it.

As

As they both went frequently to sell fruits and milk in the city, and as people were glad to see them, they had an opportunity of observing what passed in the world, and of giving an account to each other of their little reflections. They compared their lot to that of the most opulent citizens, and found themselves happier and wiser. "The senseless creatures!" said Lubin, "during the finest part of the year they shut themselves up in quarries! Is it not true, Annete, that our hut is preferable to those magnificent prisons which they call palaces? When the thatch that covers us is burnt up by the sun, I go to the neighbouring forest, and in less than an hour make you a new house more cheerful than the former. The air and the light are ours. A branch less gives us the freshness of the East or the North; a branch more defends us from the heats of the South and the rains of the West: that is not very dear Annete!"

"No truly, said she; "and I cannot think why in the fine weather they do not come all, two and two, to live in a pretty hut. Have you seen, Lubin, those tapestries of which they are so vain? What comparison between them and our beds of verdure? How we sleep on them! how we wake!"—"And you, Annete, have you re-
marked

“ marked what trouble they take to give a rural
“ air to the walls which shut them up ? Those
“ landscapes which they endeavour to imitate,
“ nature has made for us ; it is for us that the
“ sun shines ; it is for us that the seasons de-
“ light to vary themselves.” “ Right,” said
Annete, “ I carried the other day some straw-
“ berries to a lady of quality ; they were en-
“ tertaining her with music. Ah, Lubin,
“ what a terrible noise ! I said in myself :
“ why does she not come some morning and
“ hear our nightingales ? The unhappy wo-
“ man was laid down upon cushions ; she
“ yawned in such a manner as to move pity.
“ I asked what ailed her ladyship ; they told
“ me that she had the vapours. Do you know,
“ Lubin, what the vapours are ?”—“ Alas,
“ no ; but I am afraid they are one of those
“ distempers which one gets in the city, and
“ which take away from persons of quality the
“ use of their legs. That is very sad, is it
“ not, Annete ? And if they were to hinder
“ you from running upon the grass, you would
“ be very sorry, I believe !”—“ O, very for-
“ ry ; for I love to run, especially, Lubin,
“ when I run after you.”

Such was pretty nearly the philosophy of Lu-
bin and Annete. Free from envy and ambi-
tion, their state had nothing humiliating to
them, nothing painful. They passed the fine
weather

weather in that green hut, the master-piece of Lubin's art. In the evening they were obliged to lead back their flocks to the village; but the fatigue and pleasures of the day prepared them a tranquil repose. The morning recalled them to the fields, more earnest to see each other again. Sleep effaced in their lives nothing but the moments of absence: it preserved them from dullness. Nevertheless a happiness so pure was not unalterable. The slender waste of Annete became insensibly rounder. She knew not the cause of it; Lubin himself did not suspect it.

The Bailiff of the village was the first who perceived it. "God defend you," Annete, said he to her one day; "you seem to me very round!" "True," said she, dropping a curtsey.—"But, Annete, what has happened to this handsome shape? Have you had any love-affair?"—"Any love-affair? not that I know."—"Ah! child! nothing is more certain; you have listened to some of our young fellows."—"Yes, truly, I do listen to them: does that spoil the shape?"—"No, not that; but some of them have a kindness for you."—"Kindness for me?" "Ay, Lubin and I are kind to each other all the day long."—"And you have granted him every thing, is it not so?"—"Oh, Lord, yes: Lubin and I have nothing to refuse one another."—"How, nothing to
" refuse

“refuse one another!”—“Oh, nothing at all;
“I should be very sorry if he kept any thing
“to himself, and more sorry still to have him
“believe, that I have any thing which is not
“his. Are not we cousins?”—“Cousins?”
“—Cousins-germain, I tell you.” “O heaven!”
cried the bailiff, “here is an adventure!”—“Ay, or else do you think
“that we should have been every day together?
“that we should have had but one and the
“same but? I have heard it said, indeed, that
—“the shepherds are to be dreaded; but a cousin
“is not dangerous.” The judge continued to interrogate. Annete continued to reply, in-
somuch that it was clearer than the day that she would shortly be a mother. Become a
mother before marriage! that was a riddle to
Annete. The bailiff explained it to her.
“What,” said he to her, “the first time that
“this misfortune happened, did not the sun
“hide himself? did not the heavens thunder
“upon you?” “No,” replied Annete, “I
“remember it was the finest weather in the
“world.”—“Did not the earth shake! did
“it not open itself!”—“Alas, no,” said
Annete again, “I saw it covered with flow-
“ers.”—“And do you know what a crime
“you have committed?”—“I know not
“what a crime is; but all that we have done,
“I swear to you, was in good friendship, and
“without

“ without any ill design: you think that I am
“ big with child; I should never have thought
“ it; but if it be so, I am very glad of it: I
“ shall have a little Lubin, perhaps.” “ No,”
replied the man of law, “ you will bring into
“ the world a child, which will own neither
“ its father nor mother, which will be ashamed
“ of its birth, and will reproach you for it.
“ What have you done, unhappy girl, what
“ have you done! How I pity you! and how
“ I pity that innocent!” These last words
made Annete grow pale and tremble. Lubin
found her all in tears. “ Hear,” said she to
him with terror, “ do you know what has
“ happened? I am big with child.”—“ Big,
“ and by whom?”—“ By you.”—“ You
“ joke. And how has that happened?”—
“ The bailiff has just explained it to me.”
—“ Well,”—“ Well, when we thought we
“ were only showing kindness to each other,
“ we were making love.” “ That is droll!”
said Lubin: only see how we come into
“ the world. But you are in tears, my dear
“ Annete! Is it this that makes you uneasy?”
—“ Yes, the bailiff has made me tremble:
“ my child, he said, will own neither its fa-
“ ther nor mother; he will reproach us with
“ his birth.”—“ Why?”—“ Because we are
“ cousins, and have committed a crime. Do
“ you know, Lubin, what a crime is?”—

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N

“ Yes,

" Yes, it is a wicked thing. For example,
" it is a crime to take away life from any
" one ; but it is not to give it. The bailiff
" does not know what he says."—Ah, my
" dear Lubin ! go and find him out, I be-
" seech thee ; I am all of a tremble. He
" has put I know not what into my soul, which
" embitters all the pleasure I had in loving
" thee."

Lubin ran to the bailiff. " A word, if you
" please, Mr. Judge," said he accosting him :
" you will have it that I am not to be the fa-
" ther of my own child, and that Annete is
" not to be its mother ?" " Ah, wretch !
" dare you show yourself," said the bailiff,
" after ruining this young innocent ?" " You
" are a wretch yourself," replied Lubin. " I
" have not ruined Annete ; she waits me now
" in our hut. But it is you, wicked man,
" that (she says) have put I know not what
" into her soul, that grieves her ; and it is very
" ill done to afflict Annete."—" You young
" villain, it is you that have stolen from her
" her chief good in the world."—" And what
" is that ?"—" Innocence and honour."—
" I love her more than my life," said the shep-
" herd ; " and if I have done her any injury, I
" am here to repair it. Marry us ; who hin-
" ders you ? We ask no better."—" That
" is impossible."—" Impossible ! And why ?
" The

"The most difficult part in my opinion is over, seeing we are now father and mother." "And there is the crime," cried the judge: "you must separate, you must fly each other."—"Fy each other! And have you the heart to propose it to me, Mr. Bailiff? And who is to take care of Annete and my child? Quit them! I would sooner die." "The law obliges thee to it," said the bailiff. "There is no law that holds good there," replied Lubin, clapping on his hat. "We have a child without you, and if it please heaven we will have more, and we will love for ever."—"Ah, the audacious young knave, what rebel against the law!"—"Ah, the wicked man, the bad heart, that wants me to abandon Annete! Let me go and find out our parson," said he, to himself: "he is a good man, and will have pity on us." The priest was severer than the judge, and Lubin retired confounded at having offended heaven without knowing it. "For after all," said he still, "we have done nobody any harm."

"My dear Annete," cried Lubin on seeing her again, "every body condemns us; but no matter: I will never leave you." "I am big with child," said Annete, reclining her face on her two hands, which she bathed with tears, "and I cannot be your wife! Leave me, I am distressed; I have no longer any
N 2 "pleasure

"pleasure in seeing you. Alas, I am ashamed of myself, and I reproach myself for all the moments that I have passed with you." "Ah, the cursed bailiff," said Lubin, "but for him we were so happy!"

From that moment, Annete, a prey to her grief, could not endure the light. If Lubin wanted to console her, he saw her tears stream afresh: she replied to his caresses only by pushing him off with horror. "What! my dear Annete," said he to her, "am I no longer the Lubin you loved so much?"—"Alas, no; you are no longer the same. I tremble the moment you come near me; my child who moves in my womb, and whom I should have had so much joy in feeling, seems already to complain that I have given him my own cousin for a father." "You will hate my child, then?" said Lubin to her sobbing. "Oh no, no, I shall love it with all my soul," said she. "At least they will not forbid me to love my child, to give him my milk and my life. But that child will hate its mother: the judge has foretold it to me." "Do not mention that old devil," said Lubin, clasping her in his arms, and bathing her with tears; "your child shall love you, my dear Annete; he will love you, for I am his father."

Lubin in despair employed all the eloquence
of

of nature and love to dissipate Annete's fear and grief. "Let us see, said he, "what have we done to anger heaven? We have led out our flocks to feed in the same meadows; there is no harm in that. I have built a hut, you have taken pleasure in reposing in it; there is no harm in that. You slept upon my knees; I drew in your breath, and that I might not lose one gasp, I drew gently near you; there was no harm yet. It is true, that sometimes awakened by my caresses" "Alas!" said she sighing, "there was no harm in that."

It was in vain that they recalled to memory all that had passed in the hut; they saw nothing but what was natural and innocent, nothing of which any body had any room to complain, nothing at which heaven could be incensed. "Yet that is all," said the shepherd; "where then is the crime? We are cousins, so much the worse; but if that does not hinder our loving, why ought it to hinder our marrying? Am I on that account less the father of my child? and you less its mother? Mark me, Annete! let them talk on: you depend on no body, I am my own master: let us dispose of ourselves: every one does what he pleases with his own property. We shall have a child? so much the better. If it be a daughter, she will be genteel and amiable

“ like yourself; if it be a boy, he will be alert
 “ and joyous like his father. It will be a trea-
 “ sure to us both. We will try who can love
 “ him best; and say what they will, he will
 “ know his father and mother by the tender
 “ cares we shall take of him.” It was in vain
 that Lubin talked sense and reason; Annete
 was not at ease, and her uneasiness redoubled
 every day. She did not comprehend the dis-
 course of the bailiff, and this very obscurity
 rendered his reproaches and menaces more ter-
 rible.

Lubin, who saw her consuming herself with
 sorrow, said to her one morning, “ My dear
 “ Annete, your grief will kill me; return to
 “ yourself, I beseech you. I have this night
 “ thought of an expedient which may suc-
 “ ceed for us. The parson told me, that
 “ if we were rich, the evil would be but half
 “ as great, and that by means of a good deal
 “ of money cousins drew themselves out of
 “ trouble; let us go and find out the lord of
 “ the manor: he is rich, and not proud: he
 “ is a father to us all: with him a shepherd
 “ is a man; and I have heard it said in the
 “ village, that he likes that they should get
 “ children. We will relate our adventure to
 “ him, and beg him to assist us in repairing the
 “ evil, if there be any.” “ What would you
 “ dare?” said the shepherdes . . . “ Why not?”
 replied

replied Lubin : " my lord is goodness itself,
" and we should be the first unfortunate crea-
" tures whom he would have left without
" succour."

Behold then Annete and Lubin directing
their way towards the castle. They ask to speak
with his lordship, and are permitted to appear.
Annete, with her eyes fixed on the ground,
and her hands placed one in another over her
round little waist, makes a modest curtsy.
Lubin makes a leg and pulls off his hat, with
the simple graces of nature. " My Lord,"
" said he, " here is Annete big with child,
" saving your presence, and it is I alone who
" have done her that injury. Our judge says
" that we ought to be married, in order to
" get children ; I desire him to marry us.
" He says that is impossible, because we are
" cousins; but I think the thing may be done,
" seeing that Annete is big with child, and
" that it is not more difficult to be a husband
" than a father. The bailiff gives us to the
" devil, and we recommend ourselves to you."
The good man who listened to him was ob-
liged to constrain himself, to with-hold laugh-
ing at Lubin's harangue. " Children," says
he, " the bailiff is right. But take courage,
" and tell me how the affair has happened."
Annete, who had not thought Lubin's man-
ner sufficiently touching, (for Nature teaches
women

women the art of softening and gaining upon men, and Cicero is but a novice to a young female petitioner) Annete then spoke. "Alas, my Lord," said she, "nothing is more plain or more natural than all that has happened to us. Lubin and I from our infancy kept sheep together: we caressed one another while infants; and when we see one another continually, we grow up without perceiving it. Our parents are dead; we were alone in the world. If we love not one another, said I, who will love us? Lubin said the same. Leisure, curiosity, and I know not what besides, made us try every method of testifying that we loved one another; and you see what has befallen us. If I have done ill, I shall die with sorrow. All that I desire is, to bring my child into the world in order to console him when I shall be no more." "Ah, my Lord," said Lubin, bursting into tears, "prevent Annete from dying. I should die too, and that would be a pity. If you knew how we lived together! you should have seen us before this old bailiff struck terror into our souls: it was then who should be gayest. See now how pale and sorrowful she is, she whose complexion could have defied all the flowers of the spring. What disheartens her most is, that they threaten

" her

"her that her child will reproach her with
"its birth." At these last words Annete was
not able to contain her sobs." "He will
"come then," said she, "to reproach me in
"my grave. I only ask of heaven to live
"long enough to give him suck; and may I
"die the instant he has no need of his mo-
"ther." At these words she covered her face
with her apron, to hide the tears which over-
flowed it.

The wise and virtuous mortal whose suc-
cour they implored, had too much sensibility
himself not to be touched with this affecting
scene. "Go, children," said he; "your
"innocence and love are equally respectable.
"If you were rich, you would obtain the
"permission of loving one another, and of
"being united. It is not just that your mis-
"fortune should be deemed a crime." He
disdained not to write to Rome in their favour,
and Benedict XIV. consented with pleasure
that these lovers should be made man and wife.





THE

SAMNITE MARRIAGES,

An Ancient ANECDOTE.

LET every legislator who would assure himself of the heart of men, begin by ranging the women on the side of the laws and manners; let him put virtue and glory under the guard of beauty, under the tutelage of love: without this agreement he is sure of nothing.

Such was the policy of the Samnites, that warlike republic which made Rome pass under the yoke, and which was a long time her rival. What made a Samnite a warrior, a patriot, a man virtuous against every trial, was the care they took to attach to all these qualities the most valuable prize of love.

The ceremony of their marriages was celebrated every year in a wide place, destined for military exercises. All the youth who were of a sufficient age to give citizens to the republic, assembled on a solemn day. There the young men chose their wives, according to the rank which

which their virtues and their exploits had given them in the annals of their country. We may easily conceive what a triumph this must be to those women who had the glory of being chosen by the conquerors, and how pride and love, those two springs of the human passions, gave force to virtues, on which all their success depended. They expected every year the ceremony of their marriages with a timid impatience: till then the young men and maidens of the Samnites never saw one another but in the temple, under the eyes of their mothers and prudent old men, with a modesty equally inviolable to both sexes. Indeed this austere confinement was no restraint to the desires: the eyes and heart made a choice; but it was to the children a religious and sacred duty to confide their inclination to the authors of their days; a secret of this sort divulged was the shame of a family. This intimate communication of the dearest sentiment of their soul, this tender disclosure, which it was not permitted them to give to their desires, their regrets, their fears, but in the respectable bosom of Nature, rendered a father and mother the friends, the consolers, the support of their children. The glory of some, the happiness of others, connected all the members of a family by the warmest interests of the human heart; and this society
of

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of pleasure and pain cemented by habitude, and consecrated by duty, lasted till the grave. If the event did not answer their desires, an inclination which had not manifested itself abandoned its object so much the easier, as it would have been in vain to have pursued it with obstinacy, and there was a necessity for its giving place to the object of a new choice: for marriage was an act of duty in a citizen. The legislature had wisely considered, that he who would not take a wife himself, depended in some measure on the wives of others; and in making a crime of adultery, he had made a duty of marriage. There was a necessity therefore of presenting themselves to the assembly as soon as they had attained the age pointed out by the laws, and of making a choice according to their rank, though it were not also according to their desires.

Among a warlike people, beauty, even in the weaker sex, has something fierce and noble, which favours of their manners. The chase was the most familiar amusement of the Samnite maidens; their skill in drawing the bow, their nimbleness in the race, are talents unknown among us. These exercises gave their persons a wonderful ease, and their action a freedom full of graces. Unarmed, modesty was painted on their countenances; as soon as they had fastened on their quivers, their head

was

was erected with a warlike assurance, and courage sparkled in their eyes. The beauty of the men had a majestic and serious character; and the image of battles, for ever present to their imaginations, gave to their looks a grave, commanding, and savage boldness. Amidst this warlike youth was distinguished, by the delicacy of his features, his sensible and tender air, the son of the brave Telespon, one of the old Samnites who had fought best for liberty. This old man, in resigning up his arms to the hands of his son, had said to him, "My son, I hear sometimes the old men, with an ill-natured raillery, telling me that I ought to clothe you like a woman, and that you would have made a pretty huntress. These railleries afflict your father; but he consoles himself in the hope that Nature has at least made no mistake in the heart which she has given you." "Take courage, my father," replied the young man, piqued with emulation; "these old men will perhaps be glad one day that their children follow my example: let them take me for a girl here, the Romans shall not be mistaken in me." Agatis kept his word with his father, and displayed in his first campaigns an intrepidity, an ardour which changed their railleries into encomiums. His companions said to one another with astonishment, "Who

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"would have thought this effeminate body
 "was filled with so manly a courage? Cold,
 "hunger, fatigue, nothing daunts him: with
 "his touching and modest air he braves death
 "full as well as we."

One day, in presence of the enemy, Agatis
 seeing with composure a shower of arrows fall-
 ing around him, "You who are so handsome
 "how are you so brave?" said one of his
 companions to him, who was remarkable for
 his ugliness. At these words the signal for the
 attack was given. "And you who are so
 "ugly," replied Agatis, "will you now see
 "which of us two shall carry off the standard
 "of the battalion we are going to charge?"
 He said: both of them spring forward, and,
 in the midst of the carnage, Agatis appears
 with the standard in his hand.

However, he now drew near to the age
 wherein he was to enter himself in the num-
 ber of married persons, and, in the quality
 of father, to obtain that of citizen. The
 young damsels, who heard speak of his valour
 with esteem, and saw his beauty with a soft
 emotion, envied each other his looks. One
 alone at last attracted them, the beautiful Ce-
 phalis.

She re-united in the highest degree that mo-
 desty and boldness, those noble and touching
 graces, which characterised the Samnite beau-
 ties.

ties. The laws, as I have said, had not forbid the eyes to speak ; and the eyes of love are very eloquent, when it has no other language. If you have seen sometimes lovers constrained by the presence of a severe witness, do not you admire with what rapidity the whole soul unfolds itself in the lightening of one fugitive glance ? A look of Agatis declared his trouble, his fears, his hope, and the emulation of virtue and glory with which love had just enflamed his heart. Cephalis seemed to forbid her eyes to meet those of Agatis ; but her eyes were sometimes a little slow in obeying her, and were not cast downwards till after they had been answered. One day especially, and it was that which decided the triumph of her lover, one day her looks being fixed upon him, after remaining for some time immoveable, were turned up towards heaven with the most tender expression. “ Ah ! I understand that
“ with,” said the young man in himself ; “ I
“ understand it, and I will accomplish it.
“ Charming maiden, have I flattered myself
“ too much ? Did not your eyes, raised up to
“ heaven, beseech it to render me deserving
“ of chusing you ? Well, heaven has listened
“ to you, I feel it by the emotions of my soul.
“ But, alas ! all my rivals (and I shall have
“ rivals without number) will dispute with
“ me this honour : a brilliant action depends

“ upon circumstances ; should any one happier than I attain it, he has the honour of the first choice ; and the first choice, beautiful Cephalis, cannot but fall upon you.”

These ideas took up his attention without remission : they also took up the attention of his mistress. “ If Agatis had to chuse,” said she, “ he would fix upon me ; I dare believe it : I have observed him well, I have thoroughly read his soul. Whether he presents himself to my companions, or whether he speaks to them, he has not with them that complaisance, that sweet earnestness, which he betrays on seeing me. I perceive also that his voice, naturally soft and tender, has something still more sensible when he speaks to me. His eyes especially Oh ! his eyes have said to me what they say to no one else ; and would it had pleased the gods that he had been the only one who distinguished me from the crowd ! Yes, my dear Agatis, it would be a misfortune to seem handsome to any other than thee. What comparison between him and those youth who terrify me while they seek me out with their eyes ! Their murderous air frightens me. Agatis is valiant, but he has nothing ferocious in him ; even under arms, we see in him I know not what that is moving. He will perform

“perform prodigies of valour, I am sure;
“but, after all, if fortune betrays love, and
“if some other has the advantage that
“thought chills me with terror.”

Cephalis dissembled not her fears to her mother. “Put up vows,” said she to her, “put up vows for Agatis’s glory; you will put them up for the happiness of your daughter. I think, I am sure he loves me; and can I not adore him? You know that he has the esteem of our elders; he is the idol of all my companions: I see their confusion, their blushes, their emotion at his approach: one word from his mouth fills them with pride.” “Very well,” said her mother smiling, “if he loves you, he will chuse you.”—“He would chuse me without doubt, if he had the right of chusing; but, my mother”—“But, my daughter, he will have his turn.” “His turn, alas! it will be a pretty time,” replied Cephalis, fixing her eyes on the ground.—“How, my daughter! Methinks to hear you, the word is, who shall have you! You flatter yourself a little.”—“I do not flatter myself; I tremble; happy if I had known to please him only whom I shall always love!”

Agatis, on his side, the evening of the day on which he took the field, said to his father,

embracing him, "Adieu, dear author of my
 "life; either you see me for the last time,
 "or you shall see me again the most glorious
 "of all the sons of the Samnites."—"Well
 "said, my boy: thus it is that a well-born
 "son ought to take leave of his father. In
 "reality, I see thee animated with an ardour
 "that astonishes even myself; what propitious
 "deities inspire thee?"—"What deities, my
 "father? Nature and Love, the desire of
 "imitating you, and of meriting Cephalis."
 "—"Oh! I understand; love is concerned in
 "it: there is no harm in that. Come, tell
 "me a little: I think I have sometimes dis-
 "tinguished your Cephalis among her com-
 "panions."—"Yes, my father, she is ea-
 "sily distinguished."—"But do you know
 "that she is very beautiful?"—"Beautiful!
 "beautiful as glory."—"I think I see her,"
 continued the old man, who took a delight in
 animating him; "I see in her the figure of
 "a nymph." "Ah! my father," cried A-
 "gatis, "you do a great deal of honour to
 "the nymphs."—"An elegant gait?"—"
 "And still more noble."—"A fresh com-
 "plexion?"—"The rose itself."—"Long
 "tresses braided with grace?"—"And her
 "eyes, my father, her eyes? Oh! that you
 "had seen them, when lifted up to heaven
 "after being fixed on me, they prayed for
 "victory."

“victory.”—“You are right, she is all
“charming, but you will have rivals.”—
“Rivals! I have undoubtedly a thousand.”
—“They will carry her off from you.”—
“They will carry her off from me?”—“To
“tell you the truth, I am afraid of it; these
“Samnites are very brave young fellows!”
—“Oh! let them be as brave as you please;
“that is not what disturbs me. Let them but
“give me an opportunity of meriting Cepha-
“lis, you shall hear of me.” Telephon, who
till then had taken a delight in stimulating
him, could no longer contain his tears. “Ah!
“the rare present that heaven makes us,” said
he, embracing him, “when he gives us a
“sensible heart! It is the principle of all the
“virtues. My dear child, you overwhelm
“me with joy. There remains still in my
“veins sufficient to make one campaign; and
“you promise me such fine things, that I
“will make this along with you.”

The day of departure, according to custom,
the whole army filed off before the young mai-
dens, who were ranged on the spot, to ani-
mate the warriors. The good old Telephon
marched by his son's side. “Ah, ah!” said
“the other old men, “see Telephon is grown
“young again: where is he going then at
“his age?” “To a wedding,” replied the
good man, “to a wedding.” Agatis made
him

him remark Cephalis from afar, who towered above her companions with a grace perfectly celestial. His father, who had his eyes upon him, perceived, that, in passing before her; that sweet and serene countenance was enflamed with a martial ardour, and became terrible as the countenance of Mars. "Courage, my son," said he to him; "indulge thy passion, it becomes thee well."

Part of the campaign passed between the Samnites and the Romans in observing each other, without coming to any decisive action. The strength of the two states consisted in their armies; and the generals on both sides acted like able officers. However, the young Samnites, who were to marry, burned with impatience of coming to blows. "I have done nothing yet," said one, "worthy to be inscribed in the annals of the republic; I shall have the shame of hearing myself named without any eulogy to distinguish me." "What pity," said another, "that they vouchsafe not to offer us an opportunity of signalizing ourselves! I should have done wonders this campaign." "Our general," said the greater part, "will dishonour us in the eyes of our elders and wives. If he leads us back without fighting, they will have room to think that he mistrusted our valour."

But

But the sage warrior who was at their head heard them unmoved. From his slowness and delays, he promised himself two advantages: one was to persuade the enemy that he was weak or fearful, and to engage him, in this confidence, to an imprudent attack; the other, to suffer the impatience of his warriors to increase, and to carry their ardour to excess, before he risked a battle. Both these stratagems succeeded. The Roman general, haranguing his troops, pointed out to them the Samnites wavering, and ready to fly before them. "The genius of Rome triumphs," said he to them; that of our enemies trembles, and is not able to sustain our approach. Come on, brave Romans; if we have not the advantage of ground, that of valour makes it up to us: it is ours; let us march." "There they are," said the Samnite general to his impatient youth; "let us suffer them to approach within bow shot, and you shall then have all the liberty imaginable to deserve your wives."

The Romans advance; the Samnites wait them with resolution. "Let us fall upon them," said the Roman general; "an immoveable body cannot sustain the impetuosity of that which runs upon them." On a sudden the Samnites themselves spring forward,

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ward, with the rapidity of courfers when the barrier is opened to them. The Romans halt; they receive the shock without being broken or difordered; and the skillfulness of their chief changes on a fudden the attack to a defence. They fought a long time with incredible obftinacy: to conceive it, we muft picture to ourfelves men who had no other paffions than love, nature, country, liberty, glory, defending in thofe decifive moments, all thofe interefts at once. In one of the redoubted attacks of the Samnites, old Teleſpon was dangerously wounded, as he fought by the fide of his fon. The youth, full of love for his father, feeing the Romans giving way in all parts, and thinking the battle won, purfued the invincible movement of nature, and drawing his father out of the tumult, helped him to drag himſelf to ſome diſtance from the place of combat. There, at the foot of a tree, he dreſſed, with tears, the deep wound of the venerable old man. While he was drawing the dart out of it, he heard near him the noiſe of a troop of Samnites, who had been repulſed. “Whither are you going, my friends,” ſaid he to them, quitting his father! “You fly! “this is your way;” and perceiving the left wing of the Romans uncovered, “Come “on,” ſaid he, “let us attack their flank: “they are vanquiſhed, if you but follow me.”

This

This rapid evolution struck terror into that wing of the Roman army ; and Agatis, seeing them put to the rout, " Pursue," said he, " my friends, the road is open : I quit you " for a moment, to go and assist my father." Victory at last decided for the Samnites, and the Romans, too much enfeebled by their losses, were obliged to retire within their walls.

Telephon had fainted away through pain. The cares of his son re-animated him. " Are " they beaten ?" demanded the old man. " They are putting the finishing stroke to it," said the young one : " things are in a good " posture." " If so," said the old man smiling, " endeavour to recall me to life : it is " sweet to conquerors ; and I would see thee " married." The good man, for a long time, had not strength to say more ; for the blood, which had flowed from his wound, had reduced him to extremity.

The Samnites, after their victory, busied themselves the whole night in succouring the wounded : they spared no pains to save the worthy father of Agatis ; and he recovered, though with some difficulty, of his weakness.

The return from the campaign was the time of their marriages, for two reasons : one, that the reward of services done their country might follow them close ; and that the example might

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might thence have more force : the other, that during the winter the young husbands might have time to give life to new citizens, before they went to expose their own. As the deeds of this glowing youth had been more brilliant than ever, they thought proper to give more pomp and splendor to the feast, which was to be their triumph.

There were few maidens in the state, who had not, like Cephalis, some communication of sentiments and desires with some one of the young men ; and each of them put up vows for him whose choice she hoped to fix, if he should have it in his power to chuse.

The place in which they were to assemble, was a vast amphitheatre, entered by triumphal arches, on which were seen hung up the spoils of the Romans. The young warriors were to repair there armed at all points ; the young maidens with their bow and quiver, and as well clad as the simplicity of a state, in which luxury was unknown, permitted. “ Come, “ daughters,” said the mothers, eager to adorn them, “ you must present yourselves at this “ august feast, with all the charms that heaven “ has been pleased to grant you. The glory “ of men is to conquer, that of women to “ please. Happy those who shall merit the “ wishes of these young and valiant citizens, “ who are now going to be judged the most “ worthy

“worthy of giving defenders to the state!
“the palm of merit will shelter their habitation,
“the publick esteem will surround it.
“Their children will be the elder sons of
“their country, and its most precious hope.”

While they spoke thus, these tender mothers interweaved with vine leaves and myrtle the beautiful tresses of these young virgins, and gave to the foldings of their veil that air and turn which was the most favourable to the character of their beauty. From the knots of the girdle beneath the bosom, they created waves of the most elegant drapery, fixed the quiver on their shoulders, instructed them to present themselves with grace, leaning on their bow, and threw back their light robe negligently, above one of their knees, in order to give their gait more ease and majesty. This industry of the Samnite mothers was an act of piety; and gallantry itself, employed in the triumph of virtue, assumed the sacred character of it. The maidens, admiring themselves in the crystal of the pure wave, never thought themselves sufficiently handsome; each of them exaggerated the advantages of her rivals, and dared no longer count upon her own.

But of all the wishes formed in that great day there were none more ardent than those of the beautiful Cephalis. “May the gods grant
“us our prayers,” said her mother to her, em-

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bracing

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bracing her ; “ but, my daughter, wait their
 “ will with the submission of an humble heart ;
 “ if they have given you some charms, they
 “ know what value to set upon them. It is
 “ for you to crown their gifts with the graces
 “ of modesty. Without modesty, beauty may
 “ dazzle, but will never touch the heart. It
 “ is by this that it inspires a tender veneration,
 “ and obtains a kind of worship. Let
 “ this amiable modesty serve as a veil to desires,
 “ which, perhaps, may become extinct
 “ before the day closes, and give place to a
 “ new inclination.” Cephalis was not able to
 bear this idea without letting fall some tears.
 “ These tears,” said her mother to her, “ are
 “ unworthy a Samnite maiden. Learn that
 “ of all the young warriors now about to assemble,
 “ there is not one but has lavished
 “ his blood for our defence, and our liberty;
 “ that there is not one of them but merits you,
 “ and towards whom you ought to be proud
 “ of paying the debt due from your country.
 “ Think of that, dry up your tears, and follow
 “ me.”

On his side, the good old Telephon conducted his son to the assembly. “ Well,” said he, “ how goes the heart ?” I have been sufficiently pleased with you this campaign,
 “ and I hope they will speak well of it.”
 “ Alas ! said the tender and modest Agatis,
 “ I had

A MORAL TALE.

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“ I had but a moment for myself. I should
“ perhaps have done something ; but you were
“ wounded. I owed all my attention to you.
“ I do not reproach myself for having sacri-
“ ficed my glory to you : I should be incor-
“ solable for having betrayed my country ;
“ but I should have been no less for having
“ abandoned my father. Thank heaven, my
“ duties were not incompatible ; the rest is
“ in the hand of the gods.” “ I admire
“ how religious we are, when we are afraid,”
said the old man smiling : “ confess that you
“ were more resolute, when you went out
“ to charge the Romans ; but take courage,
“ all will go well : I promise you a hand-
“ some wife.”

They repair to the assembly, where several generations of citizens, ranged in amphitheatre formed a most awful sight. The circuit rounded off into an oval. On one side were seen the daughters at the feet of their mothers ; on the other side, the fathers ranged above their sons : at one end sat the counsel of old men ; at the other the youth not yet marriageable, placed according to the degrees of their age. The new-married pairs of the preceding years crowned the circle. Respect, modesty, and silence, reigned throughout. This silence was suddenly interrupted by the noise of war-like instruments, and the Samnite general was
P 2 seen

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sent to enter environed with heroes, who commanded under him. His presence made all the assembly look down. He traverses the circuit, and goes to place himself with his retinue in the midst of the sages.

The annals of the republick are opened, and a herald reads with a loud voice, according to the order of time, the testimony which the magistrates and generals had paid to the behaviour of the young warriors. He, who by any cowardice or baseness had set a blot upon his name, was condemned by the laws to the infamous punishment of celibacy, till he had redeemed his honour by some brave action : but nothing was more rare than examples of this sort. A plain honesty, an irreproachable bravery, was the least praise that could be given a young Samnite ; and it was a kind of shame to have done only one's duty. The greater part amongst them had given proofs of a courage, a virtue, which every where else would be deemed heroick, but which in the manners of that people were hardly to be distinguished, so familiar were they. Some of them raised themselves above their rivals by actions that were striking ; but the judgement of the spectators became more severe in proportion as they heard published virtues more worthy of commendation ; and those which had at first struck them, retired
into

into the crowd of praise-worthy actions, effaced by greater strokes. The first campaigns of Agatis were of this number; but when they came to the recital of the last battle, and they related how he had abandoned his father to rally his companions, and lead them back to the fight; this sacrifice of nature to his country carried all their suffrages: the tears ran from the eyes of the old men: those who surrounded Telespon embraced him with joy, those at a greater distance congratulated him by gesture and look: the good man smiled and burst into tears; the very rivals of his son viewed him with respect; and the mothers, pressing their daughters in their arms, wished them Agatis for a husband. Cephalis, pale and trembling, dares not lift up her eyes: her heart, filled with joy and fear, had suspended its motion; her mother, who supported her on her knees, dares not speak to her for fear of betraying her, and thinks she sees all eyes fixed upon her.

As soon as the murmur of the universal applause was appeased, the herald names Parmeno, and relates of this young man, that in the last battle, the courser of the Samnite general being thrown down under him, transfixed by a deadly shaft, and the hero in his fall being for a moment defenceless, a Roman soldier was on the point of piercing him with his

P 3 javelin;

javelin; when Parmeno, to save the chief's life, had exposed his own, by throwing himself before the blow, from which he had received a deep wound, "It is certain," said the general, addressing himself to the assembly, "that this brave citizen made a buckler for me with his body; and if my life be of service to my country, it is a gift of Parmeno's." At these words the assembly, less moved, but not less astonished at Parmeno's courage than that of Agatis, bestowed upon him the same eulogies; and the suffrages and good wishes were now divided between those two rivals: the herald, by order of the elders, commands silence; and those venerable judges get up to deliberate. Their opinions are opposed to each other for a long time with equal advantage. Some of them pretended, that Agatis ought not to have quitted his post to assist his father, and that he had done nothing but repair this fault by abandoning his father to rally his companions; but this unnatural sentiment was espoused by very few. The most aged of the elders then spoke and said, "Is it not virtue that we are to recompense?" "The point then is only to know which of these two emotions is the most virtuous; to abandon a dying father, or to expose one's own life. Our young warriors have both of them performed an action decisive
"with

"with respect to the victory : it is for you,
" virtuous citizens, to judge which of the two
" it must have cost most. Of two examples
" equally serviceable, the most painful is that
" which must be most encouraged."

Will it be believed of the manners of this people ? It was decided with one voice, that it was braver to tear one's self from the arms of a dying father whom we could succour, than to expose one's self to death, even though it were inevitable ; and all the suffrages were re-united in decreeing to Agatis the honour of the first choice. But the contest that was going to arise will appear still less probable. Their deliberations were carried on aloud ; and Agatis had heard that the principle of generosity alone made the balance incline in his favour. There arose in his soul a reproach which made him ashamed : " No," said he in himself, " it is a surprise, I ought not to make
" an ill use of it." He asks leave to speak ; they attend in silence : " A triumph which I
" have not merited," said he, " would be
" the torment of my life ; and in the arms of
" my virtuous spouse, my happiness would
" be embittered by the crime of having ob-
" tained her unjustly. You think you crown
" in me the person who has done most for his
" country ; ye wise Samnites, I must confess
" it, I have not entirely done it for that alone.
" I love,

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" I love, I wanted to merit what I love ; and
 " if there redounds to me any glory from a
 " conduct which you vouchsafe to commend,
 " love divides it with virtue. Let my rival
 " judge himself, and let him receive the prize
 " which I yield to him, if he has been more
 " generous than I." How is it possible to
 express the emotion which this confession
 caused in all hearts? On one side it tarnished
 the lustre of the actions of this young man ;
 and on the other it gave to the character of
 his virtue something more heroick, more sur-
 prising, more uncommon, than the most noble
 devotion of life. This stroke of frankness and
 candour produced, with regard to these young
 rivals, two very opposite effects. Some, ad-
 miring them with an undisguised joy, seemed
 to testify, by a noble assurance, that this ex-
 ample raised them above themselves ; others,
 lost and confused, appeared to be overwhelm-
 ed, as by a weight above their strength.
 The matrons and virgins, in their hearts,
 unanimously gave the prize of virtue to him
 who had the magnanimity to declare, that
 he was not worthy of it ; and the elders had
 their eyes fixed on Parmeno, who, with a
 composed countenance, waited till they should
 deign to hear him. " I know not," said
 he at last, addressing himself to Agatis, " I
 " know not to what degree the actions of
 " men

“men ought to be disinterested, in order
 “to be virtuous. There is nothing, strictly
 “speaking, but is done for our own satisfaction;
 “tion; but what I should not have done for
 “mine, is the confession I have just heard; and
 “even supposing that there may have been hitherto
 “something more brave in my conduct
 “than in yours, which is a point yet undecided,
 “the severity with which you have just
 “now judged yourself, raises you above
 “me.”

Here the elders, confounded, knew not which
 side to take: they had not even recourse to
 voices in order to determine to whom to give
 the prize. It was decided by acclamation,
 that both of them merited it, and the honour
 of the second choice was now unworthy either
 of one or the other. The most aged of the
 judges spoke again, “Why delay,” said he,
 “by our irresolutions, the happiness of our
 “young people? Their choice is made in the
 “bottom of their hearts, let them be permitted
 “to communicate one to the other the secret
 “of their desires: if the object of them
 “be different, each, without precedency, will
 “obtain the wife he loves; if it happen that
 “they are rivals, the law of chance shall
 “decide it; and there is no Samnite maiden
 “but may glory in consoling the less successful
 “of these two warriors.” Thus spoke the
 venerable

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venerable Androgeus, and all the assembly applauded.

They cause Agatis and Parmeno to advance to the middle of the circus. They begin by embracing each other, and all eyes are bedewed with tears. Trembling each, they hesitate; they are afraid to name the wife of their desires; neither of them thinks it possible that the other can have made a choice different from his own. "I love," said Parmeno, "the most accomplished of heaven's works; grace and beauty itself. "Alas!" replied Agatis, "you love her whom I adore: "it is naming her to paint her thus; the nobleness of her features, the gentle fire of her looks, "I know not what of divinity in her shape and gait, sufficiently distinguish her from the crowd of Samnite maidens. How unhappy will one of us be, reduced to another choice!" "You say true," replied Parmeno; "there is no happiness without Eliana."—"Without Eliana, say you?" "What!" cried Agatis, "is it the daughter of the wise Androgeus, Eliana, whom you love!"—"And who then should I love?" said Parmeno, astonished at the joy of his rival.—"It is Eliana! it is not Cephalis!" resumed Agatis with transport. "Ah! if so, we are happy: embrace me, you restore me to life." By their embraces it was easy to judge that they were

were reconciled about their love. The elders ordered them to draw near, and, if their choice was not the same, to declare it aloud. At the names of Eliana and Cephalis the whole amphithéâtre resounded with shouts of applause. Androgeus and Telespon, the brave Eumenes, father of Cephalis, Parmeno's father Melante, felicitated each other with the melting tenderness which mingles in the joy of old men. "My friends," said Telespon, "we have brave children there: with what ardour are they going to beget others! When I think of it, I imagine myself to be still in the flower of my age. Paternal weakness apart, the day of marriages is a festival to me: I think it is I who marry all the virgins of the commonwealth." While he spoke thus, the good man leaped with joy; and as he was a widower, they advised him to put himself again into the ranks. "No raillery," said he; "if I were always as young, I might yet do something to speak of."

They repaired to the temple, to consecrate at the foot of the altar the ceremony of the marriages. Parmeno and Agatis were conducted together in triumph; and there was ordered a solemn sacrifice, to return thanks to the gods for having given to the republick two such virtuous citizens.

THE



THE GOOD HUSBAND.

FELISONDE, one of those good fathers of a family who recal to our minds the golden age, had married his only daughter, Hortensia, to the Baron de Valsain, and his niece Amelia to the President de Lusane.

Valsain, gallant without assiduity, sufficiently tender without jealousy; too much taken up about his own glory and advancement to make himself the guardian of his wife, had left her, upon the strength of her own virtue, to deliver herself up to the dissipations of a world, in which being launched himself, he took a delight in seeing her shine. Lusane, more retired, more assiduous, breathed only for Amelia, who, on her side, lived but for him. The mutual care of pleasing was their constant employment, and to them the most sacred of duties was the sweetest of pleasures.

Old Felisonde was enjoying the union of his family, when the deaths of Amelia and Valsain diffused sorrow and mourning over it. Lusane in his grief had not even the consolation of being a father; Valsain left Hortensia

two children with very little to support them. The first sorrows of the young widow were only her husband ; but we forget ourselves in vain, we return thither insensibly. The time of mourning was that of reflection.

At Paris, a young woman who is only given to dissipation, is exempt from censure as long as she is in the power of a husband : they suppose that the person most interested ought to be the most rigid, and what he approves they dare not blame ; but, delivered up to herself, she falls again under the tutelage of a severe and jealous public, and it is not at twenty-two that widowhood is a free state. Hortensia then saw clearly that she was too young to depend only on herself, and Felisonde saw it still clearer. One day this good father communicated his fears to his nephew Lusane. " My friend," said he, " you are much to be pityed, but I am more so than you. I have but one daughter, you know how I love her, and you see the dangers that she runs. This world, which has seduced her, invites her back again ; her mourning over, she will resign herself to it ; and I am afraid, old as I am, I may live long enough to have occasion to be ashamed. My daughter has a fund of virtue ; but our virtue is within ourselves, and our honour, that honour so dear, is placed in the opinion of others."—

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" I

"I understand you, Sir, and, to say the truth, I share your uneasiness. But can we not engage Hortensia to a new match?"

"Ha, my friend! what reasons she has to oppose me! two children, two children without fortune; for you know that I am not rich, and that their father was ruined."

"No matter, Sir, consult Hortensia: I know a man, if it should be agreeable to her, who thinks justly enough, who has a heart good enough to serve as a father to her children." The good old man thought he understood him.

"O you," said he to him, "who formed the happiness of my niece Amelia, you whom I love as my own son; Lufane! heaven reads in my heart . . . But tell me, does the husband whom you propose know my daughter? Is not he afraid of her youth, her levity, the flight she has taken in the world?"—"He knows her as well as you do, and he esteems her no less."

Felisonde delayed not to speak to his daughter. "Yes, my father, I agree," said she, "that my situation is delicate. To be observant of one's self, to be afraid of one's self without ceasing, to be in the world as before one's judge, is the lot of a widow at my age: it is painful and dangerous."—"Well then, daughter, Lufane has talked to me of a husband who would suit you."—"Lu-

fane,

“fane, my father ! Ah, if it be possible,
“let him give me one like himself. Happy as
“I was myself with Valfain, I could not
“help sometimes envying the lot of his wife.”
The father, transported with her answer, went
to give an account of it to his nephew. “If
“you do not flatter me,” said Lufane, “to-
“morrow we shall all be happy.”—“What,
“my friend, is it you?”—“I myself.”—
“Alas ! my heart had told me so.”—“Yes,
“it is I, Sir, who would console your old
“age, by bringing back to her duty a daugh-
“ter worthy of you. Without giving into
“indecent extravagancies, I see that Hor-
“tensia has assumed all the airs, all the fol-
“lies of a woman of fashion. Vivacity, ca-
“price, the desire of pleasing and of amuse-
“ments, have engaged her in the labyrinth
“of a noisy and frivolous acquaintance; the
“point is to withdraw her from it. To do
“that, I have occasion for a little courage and
“resolution : I shall have perhaps tears to
“contend with, and that is much for a heart
“so sensible as mine ; nevertheless I can an-
“swer for myself. But you, Sir, you are a
“father ; and if Hortensia should come to
“complain to you . . .” “Fear nothing ;
“dispose of my daughter : I confide her to
“thy virtue ; and if the authority of a hus-

"band be not enough, I resign to you that
"of a father."

Lufane was received by Hortensia with the most touching graces: "Think that you see
"in me," said she to him, "the wife that you
"have lost; if I take her place in your heart,
"I have no longer any thing to regret."

When they came to draw up the articles,
"Sir," said Lufane to Felisonde, "let us
"not forget that we have two orphans. Their
"father's estate has not permitted him to leave
"them a large inheritance; let us not deprive
"them of their mother's, nor let the birth of
"my children be a misfortune to them." The
old man was moved even to weeping with the
generosity of his nephew, whom he called from
that moment his son. Hortensia was not less
sensible to the proceedings of her new husband.
The most elegant equipage, the richest clothes,
the most precious trinkets, a house in which
every thing breathed taste, elegance, wealth,
proclaimed to this young lady a husband atten-
tive to all her pleasures. But the joy she felt
was not of long duration.

As soon as a calm had succeeded to the tu-
mult of the wedding, Lufane thought it his
duty to come to an explanation with her on the
plan of life which he wanted to trace out to her.
He took for this serious discourse the peaceful
moment of her waking; that moment in which
the

the silence of the senses leaves the reason its perfect freedom, wherein the soul herself, lulled by the trance of sleep, seems to revive with pure ideas, and being wholly mistress of herself, contemplates herself, and reads in her own bosom, as we see to the bottom of a clear and smooth water.

“ My dear Hortensia,” said he to her, “ I want you to be happy, and to be always so. But it will cost you some slight sacrifices; and I had much rather ask them plainly of you, than engage you to them by indirect methods, which would show distrust.

“ You have passed with the Baron de Val-sain some agreeable years. Made for the world, and for pleasures, young, brilliant and dissipated himself, he inspired you with all his tastes. My character is more serious, my condition more modest, my temper a little more severe; it is not possible for me to assume his manners, and I believe it is the better for you. The path you have yet followed is strewed with flowers and snares; that which we are going to pursue has fewer attractions and fewer dangers. The charm which surrounded you would have been dissipated with youth; the serene days I prepare for you will be the same at all times. It is not in the midst of the world that an honest woman finds happiness; it is in the

Q 3

“ midst

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“ midst of her own family, in the love of her
 “ duties, in the care of her children, and in
 “ the intimate commerce of a worthy set of
 “ acquaintance.”

This preamble gave Hortensia some surprise;
 above all, the word *family* startled her ear;
 but assuming a tone of raillery, “ I shall be-
 “ come perhaps some day,” said she, “ an ex-
 “ cellent manager of a family; at present I
 “ know nothing of it. My duty is to love you,
 “ I fulfil it; my children do not yet want
 “ me; as to my acquaintance, you well know
 “ that I see none but genteel people.”—“ Let
 “ us not confound, my dear, genteel people
 “ with good people.”—“ Yes, I understand
 “ your distinction; but in point of acquaint-
 “ ances we ought not to be so difficult. The
 “ world, such as it is, amuses me, and the fa-
 “ shion of living there has nothing incompa-
 “ tible with the decency of your condition:
 “ it is not I who wear the robe, and I do not
 “ see why Madam Lufane should be more ob-
 “ bliged to be a mope than Madam de Val-
 “ sain. Be then, my dear president, as grave
 “ as you please; but do not take it amiss that
 “ your wife be giddy a few years longer: e-
 “ very age will bring its likings with it.” “ It
 “ is pity,” replied Lufane, “ to bring you back
 “ to the serious, for you are a charming tri-
 “ fler. There is a necessity, however, for
 “ talking

“ talking reason to you. In the world do you
“ love without distinction every thing that
“ composes it ?”—“ Not separately ; but the
“ medley pleases me well enough altogether.”
—“ What of the dealers in scandal, for in-
“ stance ?”—“ The scandal-mongers have
“ their charms.”—“ They give a ridiculous
“ turn to the plainest things, a criminal air
“ to the most innocent, and publish, with ex-
“ aggeration, the foibles or irregularities of
“ those whom they have just flattered.”—“ It
“ is true, that at the first glances we are fright-
“ ened at these characters, but at bottom they
“ are very little dangerous : from the moment
“ that we rail at all the world, railing does
“ no harm : it is a species of contagion which
“ weakens in proportion as it extends itself.
—“ And those fops, whose very looks are an
“ insult to a virtuous woman, and whose con-
“ versation dishonours her, what say you to
“ them ?”—“ One never believes them.”—
“ I would not imitate them in speaking ill of
“ your sex : there are many valuable women,
“ I know, but there are !”—“ Just as it is
“ amongst you, a mixture of virtues and vices.”
—“ Very well, tell me, what prevents our
“ making a choice in this mixture ?”—“ We
“ do make one for intimacy, but in the world
“ we live with the world. I, my dear, I
“ would live only with people, who by their
“ man-

“manners and character are deserving to be
 “my friends.”—“Your friends, Sir, your
 “friends! and how many of them have we
 “in life?”—“A great many, when we are
 “worthy, and know how to cultivate them.
 “I speak not of that generous friendship, the
 “devotion of which proceeds almost to he-
 “roism; I call those friends who come to me
 “with the desire of finding joy and peace, dis-
 “posed to pardon my foibles, to conceal them
 “from the eyes of the public, to treat me
 “when present with frankness, when absent
 “with tenderness. Such friends are not so
 “rare, and I presume to hope that I shall have
 “such.”—“With all my heart, we will intro-
 “duce our several acquaintance to each other.”
 —“I will not have two sets of acquain-
 “tance.”—“What, Sir, will not your door
 “be open?”—“Open to my friends, always;
 “to every comer, never, I give you my
 “word.”—“No, Sir, I will not suffer you
 “to revolt against the public by odious dis-
 “tinctions. We may not love the world, but
 “we ought to fear it, and not offend it.”—
 “Oh, be easy, my dear; that is my concern:
 “they will say that I am a brute, jealous, per-
 “haps; that signifies little to me.”—“It
 “signifies to me. I would have my husband
 “be respected, and not have cause to reproach
 “me with having made him the town-talk.

“Form

“ Form your own company as you shall think
“ proper, but leave me to cultivate my old ac-
“ quaintance, and prevent the court and town
“ from letting their tongues loose upon you.”

Lufane admired the address of a young woman in defending her liberty. “ My dear Hortensia,” said he to her, “ it is not, as a
“ whim, that I have taken my resolution : it
“ is upon thorough consideration you may be-
“ lieve me, and nothing in the world can
“ change it. Chuse, among the persons whom
“ you see, such a number of decent women
“ and prudent men as you shall think proper,
“ my house shall be theirs ; but that choice
“ made, take leave of the rest. I will join my
“ friends to your’s : our two lists united shall
“ be deposited with my porter for his constant
“ rule ; and if he deviates from it, he shall be
“ discharged. This is the plan I propose to
“ myself, and which I wanted to communi-
“ cate to you.”

Hortensia remained confounded at seeing all her fine projects vanish in a moment. She could not believe that it was Lufane, that gentle and complaisant man, who had just been talking to her. “ After this,” said she, “ who
“ can trust men ? see the tone this assumes !
“ with what composure he dictates his will to
“ me ! To see only virtuous women, and ac-
“ complished men ! a fine chimera ! And then
“ the

“ the amusing society which this circle of re-
 “ spectable friends must afford ! Such is my
 “ plan, said he, as if there was nothing more
 “ than to obey when he had said it. See how
 “ we spoil them. My cousin was a good lit-
 “ tle woman, who moped as much as he pleas-
 “ ed. She was as happy as a queen the mo-
 “ ment her husband deigned to smile upon her,
 “ and quite transported with one caress, she
 “ would come to me and boast of him as a
 “ divinity. He believes, without doubt, that
 “ according to her example I shall have no-
 “ thing else to do but to please him; he is
 “ mistaken, and if he intends to put me in
 “ leading-strings, I will let him see that I am
 “ no longer a child.”

From that moment, to the joyous, free
 and endearing manner which she had observ-
 ed with Lusane, succeeded a cold and reserv-
 ed air, which he saw plain enough, but took
 no notice of it to her. She had not failed
 to make her marriage known to that swarm
 of slight acquaintance, who are called friends.
 They came in crowds to congratulate her,
 and Lusane could not decline returning with
 her those visits of ceremony; but he infu-
 sed into his politeness such striking distinc-
 tions, that it was not difficult for Horten-
 sia to discern those whom he wished to see
 again.

In

In this number was not included one Olympia, who, with a sovereign contempt for the opinion of the public, pretends that every thing which pleases is right, and joins the example to the precept; nor one Climene, who does not know why a woman should make any scruple to change her lovers when she is tired of the man she has taken, and thinks the timid precautions of secrecy too much beneath her quality. In this number were not included those smart toilette and scene hunters, who leading in Paris their idle inutility, * *grubs in the morning and butterflies in the evening*, pass one half of their life in having nothing to do, and the other half in doing nothing; nor those obliging gentry by profession, who having no personal existence in the world, attack themselves to a handsome woman to pass for one of her dangles, and who ruin her in order to support themselves.

Hortensia retired to her own apartment uneasy and pensive. She thought she saw herself on the point of being deprived of every thing that makes life agreeable: vanity, a taste for pleasure, the love of liberty, every thing re-

* *Grubs in the morning, and butterflies in the evening.* *Chenilles le matin, et papillons le soir.* The humour of this passage, being in some degree local, cannot be entirely preserved in the translation. It is an allusion to dress, *Eu chenille* being at Paris a common cant phrase for a morning dishabille.

volted against the empire which her husband wanted to assume. However, having armed herself with resolution, she thought it her duty to dissemble as yet, the better to chuse the moment of breaking out.

The next day Lufane asked her if she had made out her list. "No, Sir," said she, "I have not, and shall not make any." "Here is mine," continued he, without any discomposure: "see, if in the number of your friends and of mine I have forgot any one you like, and that is fit for us."—"I have told you, Sir, that I shall not meddle in your arrangements, and I beg of you once for all not to interfere in mine. If our acquaintance do not suit, let us do like all the rest of the world: let us divide them without constraining ourselves. Have those whom you like to dinner; I will have those whom I like to supper."—"Ah my dear Hortensia! what you propose to me is far from my principles! Do not think of it: never in my house shall such a custom take place. I will make it as agreeable as I can to you; but no distinction, if you please, between your friends and mine. This evening all whom this list contains are invited to sup with you. Receive them well, I beseech you, and prepare yourself to live with them." At these words he retired, leaving the

the list for Hortensia to peruse. "There," said she, "his law is laid down!" And running it over with her eyes, she was encouraging herself not to submit to it, when the Countess de Fierville, Valsain's aunt, came to see her, and found her with tears in her eyes. This haughty woman had taken Hortensia into her friendship, and as she flattered her inclinations, had gained her confidence. The young lady, whose heart stood in need of consolation, told her the cause of her chagrin. "How! what," cried the Countess, "after having had the folly to dispose of yourself so unsuitably, will you also be so weak as to degrade yourself? You a slave! and to whom? a man of the robe! Remember that you have had the honour to be Madam de Valsain." Hortensia was now ashamed of having had the weakness to expose her husband. "Though he might be in the wrong," said she, "that should not hinder me from respecting him: he is the honestest man in the world, and what he has done for my children."—"An honest man! and who is not so? That is a merit to be met with in every street. What has this honest man done then so wonderful for your children? He has not robbed them of their fortune. To be sure it would have been worth while to have abused your father's weakness! No, Madam, he has not

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“acquired the right of talking so magisterially. Let him preside in his own court, but leave you to command at home.” At these words Lusane entered. “In my house, Madam, it is neither my wife nor I that commands, it is reason; and probably it is not you that she will chuse for an arbitress.” “No, Sir,” replied the Countess with a commanding tone, “it is not for you to make laws for this lady. You have heard me, and I am glad of it: you know my opinion of the absurdity of your proceedings.” “Madam,” replied Lusane, “if I were as wrong as you suppose me, I am not to be corrected by affronts. Gentleness and modesty are the arms of your sex, and Hortensia by herself is much more powerful than with your assistance. Leave to us the care of coming to an agreement, seeing that we are the persons who must live together. Though you should have rendered her duties odious to her, you could not have dispensed with her fulfilling them; though you should have made her lose the confidence and friendship of her husband, you could not have made her amends for them. Spare her that advice which she neither will nor ought to follow. To another they might have been dangerous; to her, thank heaven, they are but useless. Hortensia,” added he going, “you

“you have not desired to give me uneasiness, but let this serve you as a lesson.” “See how you defend yourself!” said Madam de Fierville to Hortensia, who had not even dared to lift up her eyes. “Obey, my dear, obey. It is the portion of weak souls. Good heaven!” said she going out, “I am the gentlest, the most virtuous woman on the face of the earth; but if a husband had dared to treat me thus, I should have taken a handsome revenge of him.” Hortensia had scarce strength enough to get up to attend Madam de Fierville, so great was her terror and confusion. She perceived the advantage that her imprudence gave her husband; but far from availing himself of it, he did not even so much as reproach her with it, and his delicacy punished her more than his resentment would have done.

In the evening, the visitors being assembled, Lufane seized the moment when his wife was yet in her own apartment. “Here,” said he to them, “is the rendezvous of friendship: if you like it, come often, and let us pass our life together.” They all replied to him with one voice, that they desired nothing better. “There,” continued he, presenting to them the good Felisonde, “There is our worthy and tender father, who will be the soul of our pleasures. At his age, joy has some-

" thing more sensible and tender in it than in
 " youth, and nothing is more amiable than
 " an amiable old man. He has a daughter
 " whom I love, and whom I would make
 " happy. Assist me, my friends, to keep
 " her among us, and let love, nature, and
 " friendship conspire to render her house every
 " day more agreeable to her. She enter-
 " tains for the world the prepossessions of her
 " age; but when she shall have tasted the
 " charms of a virtuous society, this vain world
 " will touch her but little." While Lufane
 spoke thus, old Felisonde could not refrain let-
 ting fall some tears: " O my friend," said he
 clasping him in his arms, " happy the father
 " who at his death can leave his daughter in
 " such good hands!"

The instant after arrived Madam de Lufane.
 All hearts flew out to meet her; but her own
 was not easy. She disguised her ill temper un-
 der the reserved air of ceremony, and her po-
 liteness, though grave, still appeared amiable
 and touching, such a gift have the natural
 graces of embellishing every thing.

They played. Lufane made Hortensia ob-
 serve that all his company played low. " It
 " is," said he, " the way to maintain union
 " and joy. High play prepossesses and alienates
 " our minds: it afflicts those who lose, it im-
 " poses on those who win the duty of being
 " grave,

"grave, and I think it incompatible with the
 "openness of friendship," The supper was
 delicious: transport and good-humour were
 diffused round the table. The heart and the
 mind were at ease: the gallantry was such as
 modesty might smile at, and neither decency
 nor liberty were under restraint.

Hortensia in another situation would have
 relished these tranquil pleasures, but the idea
 of constraint which she attached to them em-
 bittered their sweetness.

The day after, Lusane was surprised to find
 her of a freer and pleasanter air: he suspected
 that she had taken some new resolution. "What
 "shall we do to-day?" said he to her. "I
 "am going to the play," said she, "and I
 "shall come home to supper."—"Very well,
 "and who are the ladies you are going with?"
 —"Two of Valsain's friends, Olympia and
 "Artenice." "It is cruel to me," said the
 husband, "to be obliged to give you uneasiness
 continually; but why, Hortensia will
 "you expose me to it? Do you think me so
 "inconsistent in the principles I have laid
 "down, as to consent that you should be seen
 "in publick with those women?"—"To be
 "sure you must consent to it, for the party is
 "settled, and I shall certainly not fail in it."—"Pardon me, Madam, you shall fail in it, that
 "you may not fail in the regard due to your-
 "self."

"self."—"Is it failing in regard to myself to
 "see women whom all the world sees?—
 "Yes, it is to expose yourself to be confound-
 "ed with them in the opinion of the publick."
 —"The publick, Sir, is not unjust, and in
 "the world all persons answer for themselves."
 —"The publick, Madam, supposes with
 "reason that those who are allied in pleasures,
 "are allied in manners, and you ought not to
 "have any thing in common with Olympia
 "and Artenice. If you would not break off
 "with them too abruptly, there is a way :
 "excuse yourself only from the play, and in-
 "vite them to supper : my door shall be shut
 "against all my friends, and we will be alone
 "with them." "No, Sir, no," said she to
 him with ill humour, "I will not abuse
 "your complaisance ;" and she writ to disen-
 gage herself. Nothing had cost her so much as
 this billet : tears of anger bedewed it. "To
 "be sure," said she, "I care very little for
 "these women, the play interests me still
 "less : but to see one's self opposed in every
 "thing ! never to have a will of one's own !
 "to be subjected to that of another ! to hear
 "him dictating his laws to me with an insulting
 "tranquility ! that is what drives me mad,
 "what will make me capable of every thing."

It was, however, certain, that the tran-
 quility of Lusane was far from having an in-
 sulting

from

sitting air, and it was easy to see that he did violence to himself. His father-in-law, who came to sup with him, perceived the melancholy into which he was plunged. "Ah! Sir," said Lufane to him, "I see that I have entered
" into an engagement with you very painful
" to fulfil!" He told him what had happened. Courage, my friend," said this good father to him; "let us not be discouraged;
" if it pleases heaven, you will render her worthy your cares and love. In pity to me, in
" pity to my daughter, maintain your resolution to the end. I am going to see her, and if
" she complain. . . ."—"If she complain, console her, Sir, and appear sensible to her grief:
" her reason will be more tractable when her
" heart is comforted. Let her hate me just
" at present: I expected it, I am not surprised at it; but if the bitterness of her temper
" should alter the sentiments of nature in her
" soul, if her confidence in you should be
" weakened, all would be lost. The goodness of her heart is my only resource, and
" it is only by an unalterable gentleness that
" we can prevent her being exasperated. After all, the trials to which I put her are
" grievous to her time of life, and you must
" be her support."

These precautions were useless; whether from vanity, or delicacy, Hortensia had the power

power to conceal her chagrins from the eyes of her father. "A good sign," said Lufane, "she knows how to subdue herself; and there are none but weak souls of whom we ought to despair." The day following they dined together alone, and in the most profound silence. At their getting up from table Hortensia ordered the horses to be put to, "Where are you going?" said her husband.—"To make an excuse, Sir, for the rudeness I was guilty of yesterday."—"Go, Hortensia, since you will have it so; but if my repose be dear to you, take your last leave of those women."

Artenice and Olympia, to whom Madam de Fierville had related the scene she had had with Lufane, suspected that it was he who had hindered Hortensia from going to the play with them: "Yes," said they to her, "It was he: we saw him but for a minute, but we have formed our opinion of him: he is a morose, absolute man, and one who will make you unhappy."—"He has talked to me hitherto only in the stile of friendship. It is true, that he has his particular principles, and a way of living but little compatible with the customs of the world, but" "But let him live by himself," replied Olympia, "and let him leave us to amuse ourselves in peace. Do you ask him to follow you? A husband."

“ husband is the man in the world we can best
“ spare, and I do not see why you have occa-
“ sion for his advice to receive whomsoever you
“ think proper, and to go and see whom you
“ please.” “ No, Madam,” said Hortensia
to her, “ it is not so easy as you imagine it,
“ to put one’s self, at my age, above the will
“ of a husband, who has behaved so well to-
“ wards me.” “ She gives way; see, she
“ is quite tamed,” replied Artenice. “ Ah,
“ my dear ! you do not know what it is to
“ yield once to a man, with whom one is to
“ pass one’s life. Our husbands are our ty-
“ rants if they are not our slaves. Their au-
“ thority is a torrent which swells as it runs :
“ we can stop it only at its source ; and I
“ speak from experience : for having been
“ guilty of an ~~unfortunate compliance to my~~
“ husband twice, I have been for six months
“ together obliged to struggle with him for
“ the ascendancy which my weakness had
“ given him ; and but for an unparalleled ef-
“ fort of courage it would have been all over
“ with me, I was a gone woman.” “ That
“ depends upon tempers,” said Hortensia,
“ and my husband is not one of those who are
“ to be brought down by obstinacy.” “ Un-
“ deceive yourself,” replied Olympia ; “ there
“ is not one whom gentleness ever reconciles ;
“ it is by opposing them that we rule them ;
“ it

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“ it is by the dread of ridicule and shame that
 “ we hold them : what are you afraid of ? We
 “ are very strong when we are handsome, and
 “ have nothing to reproach ourselves with.
 “ Your cause is that of all the women ;
 “ and the men themselves, the men who
 “ know how to live, will be on your side.”
 Hortensia objected the example of her cousin,
 whom Lufane had made happy. They repli-
 ed, that her cousin was a weak woman ; that
 if the life which she had led was a good one to
 her, it was because she knew no better ; but
 that a woman, launched into the great world,
 who had tasted the charms of it, and formed
 its ornament, was not made to bury herself in
 the solitude of her own house, and the narrow
 circle of an obscure acquaintance. They talked
 to her of a superb ball which the Duchess of . . .
 was to give the next day. “ All the hand-
 “ some women will be invited there,” said they
 to her : “ if your husband prevents your going
 “ it is a stroke that will cry out for vengeance,
 “ and we advise you, as friends, to seize that
 “ occasion to make a noise, and to part.”

Though Hortensia was very far from wish-
 ing to follow these violent counsels, she still
 retained a bitterness in her soul, at seeing that
 her unhappiness was going to be known in the
 world, and that they would look for her in
 vain at those feasts where but for this she
 would

would have seen herself adored. On her return home, a card was put into her hands : she read it with impatience, and sighed after having read it. Her trembling hand still held it, when her husband accosted her. " It is," said she to him carelessly, " a card of invitation to the Duchesse of — ball."—" Well, Madam ?"—" Well, Sir, I shall not go : be easy."—" Why then, Hortensia, deprive yourself of decent pleasures ? Have I forbid them you ? The honour that is done you, pleases me as much and more than it does yourself : go to the ball, eclipse every thing there that is most lovely ; that will be a triumph to me." Hortensia was not able to dissemble her surprise and joy. " Ah ! Lufane," said she to him, " Why are you not always the same ? there now is the husband I promised myself. I recover him now ; but is it for a long time ?" Lufane's company assembled in the evening, and Hortensia was adorable. They proposed suppers, parties to the play ; she engaged herself to them with the best grace. Cheerful with the men, engaging with the women, she charmed them all. Lufane alone dared not yet deliver himself up to the joy which she inspired ; he foresaw that this good-humour would not continue long without clouds. In the mean time he said just one word to his valet-
de-

de-chambre, and the next day when his wife asked for her domino, it was like a surprise in a play. They presented her with a dress for the ball, which the hand of Flora seemed to have varied with the most beautiful colours of the spring; these flowers in which the art of Italy equals nature, and deceives the ravished eyes, these flowers ran in garlands, over the light waves of a silk-tissue of the most brilliant freshness. Hortensia, in love with her dress, her husband, and herself, could not conceal her transport. Her glass being consulted, promised her the most striking successes, and that oracle never deceived her: accordingly, on appearing at the assembly, she enjoyed the flattering emotion occasioned by unanimous admiration; and to a young woman this ebb and flow, this murmur, have altogether something so touching! It is easy to judge that at her return Lufane was pretty well treated; it seemed as if she wanted to paint all the transports which she had raised. At first he received her caresses without reflection, for the wisest sometimes forget themselves; but when he recollected himself. "A ball," said he, "a domino, turns this young head! ah! what conflicts have I yet to sustain before I see her such as I could wish her!"

Hortensia had seen at the ball all those giddy young people, from whom her husband wanted

to detach her. "He does right," said they to her, "to become reasonable, and to restore you to your friends: he was going to become the public jest, and we had made a league to distress him where-ever he appeared; tell him then, for his own ease, to vouchsafe to let us see you. If we have the unhappiness to displease him, we give him leave to put himself under no restraint; but let him be contented with rendering himself invisible, without requiring that his wife should be so." Intimidated by these menaces, Hortensia gave her husband to understand, that they took it ill that his door was shut against them, that people of fashion complained of it, and proposed to remonstrate even to him upon it. "If they do," said he, "I will teach them how to take their revenge on me: let each of them marry a handsome woman, live at home with their friends, and shut their doors in my face every time that I go to trouble them."

Some days after, two of these young fellows, piqued at not having been able to introduce themselves to Hortensia, saw Lusane at the opera, and went up to him, in order to ask him the reason of the rude behaviour of his Swiss. "Sir," said the Chevalier de St. Placide to him, "have they told you that the Marquis de Cirval and myself have

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“ been twice at your house ? ” — “ Yes, gentlemen, I know that you have given yourselves that trouble. ” — “ Neither yourself nor your lady were to be seen. ” — “ That is very often the case. ” — “ Yet you see company. ” — “ Only our friends. ” — “ We are Hortensia’s friends, and in Valfain’s time we always saw her. Ah ! Sir, what an agreeable man was Valfain ! she has not lost by the exchange ; but he was the genteelest, the most complaisant of all husbands. ” — “ I know it. ” — “ He, for example, was not jealous. ” — “ How happy ! ” — “ You speak as if you envied him ; can it be true, as they say, that you are not so easy ? ” — “ Ah ! gentlemen, if ever you marry, take care you do not love your wives ; it is a cruel thing this jealousy ! ” — “ What, are you really come to that ? ” — “ Alas ! yes, for my sins. ” — “ But Hortensia is so virtuous ! ” — “ I know it well. ” — “ She lived like an angel with Valfain. ” — “ With me I hope she will live the same, ” — “ Why then do her the injustice of being jealous ? ” — “ It is an involuntary emotion, which I cannot account for. ” — “ You confess then it is a folly ? ” — “ To such a degree, that I cannot see near my wife any man of a handsome figure, or distinguished merit, but my head turns ; and this is the reason that

“ my

"my gate is shut against the most amiable people in the world." "The Marquis and I," said the Chevalier, "are not dangerous, and we hope"—"You gentlemen, you are of those who would make me unhappy all my life. I know you too well not to fear you: and since I must confess it, I have myself required of my wife that she should never see you again."—"But, Mr. President, that is but a sorry kind of compliment."—"Ah! gentlemen, it is the most agreeable one that a jealous husband can make you."—"Chevalier," said the Marquis, when Lufane had quitted them, "we wanted, I thought, to make a jest of this man."—"That was my design."—"I am afraid, God forgive me, that he makes a jest of us."—"I have some suspicion of it; but I will take my revenge on him,"—"How?"—"As men revenge themselves on a husband."

The same evening, at supper, at the Marchioness of Bellune's, they represented Lufane as the most odious of men. "And the little woman," said the Marchioness, "has the meanness to suffer him to restrain her?" "Ah! I will give her a lesson." Madam de Bellune's house was the rendezvous of all the giddy people both of city and court, and her secret for drawing them together was to af-

semble the handsomest women. Hortensia was invited to a ball which she gave. There was a necessity of acquainting Lufane with it before-hand; but without having any appearance of asking his consent. She just dropped a word *en passant*. "No, my dear," said Lufane to Hortensia, "Madam de Bellune's house is in a stile that does not suit you. Her ball is a rendezvous at which you ought not to be. The public is not obliged to believe you more infallible than another, and in order to prevent all suspicion of miscarriage, the surest way is to avoid the hazard of it." The young woman, so much the more irritated at this refusal, as she did not expect it, burst into complaints and reproaches. "You abuse," said she to him, "the authority which I have confided to you; but beware of driving me to extremities." "I understand you, Madam," replied Lufane to her, in a firmer and graver tone; "but as long as I esteem you, I shall not fear this menace, and I should fear it still less, if I were to cease to esteem you." Hortensia, who had annexed no idea to the words that had just escaped her, blushed at the meaning they seemed to carry with them, and replied only by tears. Lufane seized the moment when vivacity gave place to confusion. "I grow odious to you," said he; "yet what

" is

"is my crime?" that of saving your youth
 "from the dangers which surround it, of de-
 "taching you from that which might cast a
 "blemish, I do not say on your innocence,
 "but on your reputation, of wanting to make
 "you love soon what it is necessary that you
 "must love always."—"Yes, Sir, your in-
 "tentions are good; but you have a bad me-
 "thod of carrying them into execution. You
 "want to make me love my duty, and you
 "make a slavery of it: there may be some
 "ill consequences to be foreseen in my con-
 "nections; but I must dissolve instead of break-
 "ing them, and detach myself insensibly from
 "the people who displease you, without ma-
 "king you an object of ridicule, by impris-
 "oning me in my own house."—"When
 "the ridicule is without foundation," replied
 "Lufane, "it recoils on those who give it.
 "The prison of which you complain is the
 "asylum of virtue, and will also be that of
 "peace and happiness whenever you shall
 "think proper to make it so. You upbraid
 "me with not having used a little delicacy
 "towards these people and yourself; I have
 "had my reasons for cutting to the quick.
 "I know that at your time of life the conta-
 "gion of fashion, example, and habitude,
 "make every day new progress; and that
 "without cutting off all communication, there

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“ is no way of guarding against it. It gives
 “ me more pain than I can express to talk to
 “ you in an absolute tone ; but it is my af-
 “ fection for you that gives me the courage :
 “ a friend ought to know on occasion how to
 “ contradict a friend. Be well assured then,
 “ that as long as I love you, I shall have the
 “ strength to resist you ; and woe to you if
 “ I abandon you.”—“ Woe to me ! you
 “ esteem me very little if you think me lost
 “ the moment you cease to lead me in a string.
 “ Go, Sir, I knew how to conduct myself
 “ long ago, and Valsain, who did me justice,
 “ never had occasion to repent of his confi-
 “ dence in me. I own to you, that in my
 “ husband I did not intend to create myself
 “ a tyrant. In order to submit to your will,
 “ one ought to have a strength or a weakness
 “ which I have not ; all the denials you im-
 “ pose on me are grievous, and I will never
 “ accustom myself to them.”

Lusane, left alone to himself, reproached him-
 self for the tears he had made her shed. “ What
 “ have I undertaken ?” said he, “ and what a
 “ trial to my soul ! I her tyrant ! I, who love
 “ her more than my life, and whose heart is torn
 “ in pieces with her complaints ! If I persist,
 “ I drive her to distraction, and if I give
 “ way one single moment, I lose the fruit of
 “ my perseverance. One step into this round
 “ of

"of company, which she loves, will engage her in it a new. I must then support this cruel character, this character so much more cruel to myself than to her."

Hortensia passed the night in the greatest trouble; all violent measures presented themselves to her mind; but the probity of her mind shuddered at them. "Why discourage myself?" said she, when her wrath was a little appeased: "This man commands himself, and rules me because he does not love me; but if he should ever come to love me, I should soon reign in my turn. Let me use the only arms nature has given us, gentleness and seduction."

Laufane, who had not closed his eyes, came to ask her in the morning, with an air of friendship, how she had passed the night. "You know how," said she to him, "you who take a pleasure in disturbing my repose. Ah! Laufane, was it for you to be the cause of my unhappiness? who could have told me that I should have repented of a choice which I made with such a good will, and such good intentions?" In pronouncing these words, she had stretched out her hand to him, and two eyes, the most eloquent that love ever yet made speak, reproached him for his ingratitude. "My better half," said he to her, embracing her, "believe that I
" have

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“ have placed all my glory and happiness
 “ in making you happy. I would have your
 “ life strewed with flowers ; but permit me
 “ to pluck away the thorns. Wish for what
 “ may never cost you any regret, and be as-
 “ sured it shall be fulfilled in my soul, as
 “ soon as formed in thine. The law which
 “ I impose upon you is only your own will ;
 “ not that of the moment which is a whim,
 “ a caprice ; but that which will arise from
 “ reflection and experience, that which you
 “ will have ten years hence : I entertain for
 “ you the tenderness of a lover, the frankness
 “ of a friend, and the uneasy vigilance of a
 “ father ; there is my heart ; it is worthy of
 “ you ; and if you are still unjust enough to
 “ complain of it, you shall not long have oc-
 “ casion to do so.” This discourse was ac-
 “ companied with the most touching marks
 of a passionate love, and Hortensia appeared
 sensible of them. Eight days passed away in
 the best understanding, in the most intimate
 union that could reign between two married
 people. To the charms of beauty, of youth ;
 Hortensia joined the enchantment of those
 timid caresses, which love, in conjunction with
 duty, seems to steal from modesty. It is the
 finest of all toils to enmesh a tender heart.
 But was all this really sincere ? Lusane thought
 so ; I think so too. After all, she would not
 be

be the first woman who should have made her inclination agree with her views, and her policy with her pleasures.

In the mean time, they draw near to those days consecrated to folly and joy, and during which we are as foolish, but much less joyous than our fathers. Hortensia gave some intimation to Lufane of her desire to give an entertainment, in which music should precede a supper, which also should be followed by a dance. Lufane consented to it with the best grace in the world, but not without precaution : he agreed with his wife on the choice and number of persons whom she should invite ; and according to this arrangement the cards were distributed.

The day arrives, and every thing is prepared with the attention of a magnificent lover ; but that very morning the Swiss asks to speak to his master. “ Besides those who shall come with cards, it is my lady’s pleasure,” said he to him, “ that I admit all who come to the ball. Is that your intention, Sir ? ” “ To be sure,” said Lufane, concealing his surprise, “ and you ought not to doubt but I approve what your lady orders.” He then went directly to her, and having told her what had just happened, “ You have exposed yourself,” said he, “ to be put to shame before your servants ; you have hazarded what a
“ woman

" woman cannot too much conciliate, the
 " confidence of your husband. Is it for you,
 " Hortensia, to make use of surprise towards
 " me? Were I less persuaded of the probity
 " of your soul, what an opinion would you
 " give me of it, and what would have been
 " the consequence of this imprudence? The
 " pleasure of afflicting me for a moment, and
 " of making me more mistrustful of you than
 " I would wish to be. Ah! suffer me to
 " esteem you for ever, and respect yourself as
 " much as I respect you! I will not humble
 " you by revoking the order you have given,
 " but you will give me unspeakable uneasi-
 " ness if you do not revoke it yourself, and
 " your conduct this day shall be my rule all
 " my life." " I have committed a fault,"
 said she, " I see it, and I will repair it. I will
 " send word that I shall have neither music,
 " nor supper, nor ball, to-night; I would
 " not wear an appearance of joy when I have
 " a deadly grief in my heart. The public
 " shall know that I am unhappy, but I am
 " weary of dissembling." Lusane then fall-
 " ing at her feet, " If I loved you less," said
 he, " I should yield to thy reproaches; but I
 " adore you, I will subdue myself: I shall die
 " of grief to be hated by my wife, but I can-
 " not live in the shame of having betrayed her
 " by abandoning her. I took a sensible plea-
 " sure

“ sure in giving you an entertainment ; you
“ refuse it because I exclude what is not wor-
“ thy to approach you ; you declare to me
“ from thence, that a frivolous world is dear-
“ er to you than your husband : it is enough ;
“ I will go and give notice that the entertain-
“ ment will not take place.” Hortensia,
moved to the bottom of her soul with what
she had just heard, and more touched still with
the tears that she had seen trickle from his eyes,
recollected herself. “ What am I going to
“ persist in ?” said she. “ Are the people
“ whom he wants me to detach myself from
“ my friends ? Would they sacrifice the slight-
“ est of their interests to me ? and yet for
“ them I lose the quiet of my life, I trouble
“ it, I embitter it, I renounce every thing
“ that can form its happiness. It is spite, it
“ is vanity, that inspire me. Have I even
“ chosen to examine whether my husband
“ was right ? I have seen nothing but the
“ humiliation of obeying. But who shall
“ command if it be not the wisest ? I am a
“ slave ; and who is not so, or who ought
“ not to be so, to their duties ? I call an ho-
“ nest man a tyrant, who conjures me with
“ tears in his eyes to take care of my reputa-
“ tion ! Where then is that pride with which
“ I reproach him ? Ah ! I should be perhaps
“ much to be pitied if he were as weak as I.

“ I

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“ I afflict him in the very moment that he had
 “ shown the most delicate attention to spare
 “ me ! These are injuries, these are real
 “ ones, and not those which I attribute to
 “ him.” “ Go,” said she to one of her wo-
 men, “ go and tell your master that I would
 “ speak to him.” Scarce had she sent this
 message, than a sudden qualm seized her. “ I
 “ am going then,” said she, “ to consent to
 “ mope all my life : for I cannot conceal it
 “ from myself, but that one has amusements
 “ only in the great world ; and all those good
 “ folks among whom he wants me to live,
 “ have not the charms of Valsain’s friends.”
 As this reflection had a little changed the dis-
 position of her soul, she contented herself with
 telling Lusane, that she would willingly give
 way to him for this once. She excused her-
 self to the people who had asked to be admit-
 ted to her ball ; and the entertainment, which
 was as brilliant as possible, had all the viva-
 city of joy, without tumult and confusion.

“ Tell me then, my dear, if any thing has
 “ been wanting to our amusement ? said Lu-
 sane to Hortensia. “ You disguise some-
 “ times,” said she to him, “ the constraint
 “ you put upon me ; but entertainments do
 “ not come every day. It is in the void and
 “ silence of her house that a woman of my
 “ age draws in the poison of dullness ; and if
 “ you

“ you would see that slow poison consume my
“ youth, you will have all the pleasure of it.”
“ No, Madam,” said he to her, penetrated
with grief; “ I have not that deliberate cruel-
“ ty which you suspect me of. If I must
“ renounce the care of making you happy,
“ that dear, that pleasing care, which ought
“ to take up my whole life, at least I will not
“ have a reproach to myself with having poi-
“ soned the happiness of your days. Neither
“ I, nor the virtuous friends I have chosen
“ out for you, have sufficient to make you
“ amends for the denials I occasion you; with-
“ out that crowd which surrounded you, my
“ house is to you a dreadful solitude; you
“ have the cruelty to tell me so yourself: I
“ must then restore you to that liberty with-
“ out which you like nothing. I ask of you
“ but one more act of complaisance: to-
morrow I shall bring you a new set of com-
“ pany; and if you do not judge them worthy
“ to employ your leisure, if they do not take
“ place of this world, which is so dear to you,
“ all is over, I give you up to yourself.” Hor-
tensia had not much difficulty in granting him
what he asked: she was very sure that he had
“ nothing to present her which was equivalent
to her liberty; but it was not purchasing it
too dear to submit still to this slight trial.

The next day, on her waking, she saw her
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husband enter with a shining countenance, in which sparkled love and joy. "Here," said he, "is the new company which I propose to you; if you are not satisfied with this, I no longer know how to amuse you." Imagine the surprise of this sensible mother on seeing before her the two children whom she had by Valsain. "My children," said Lufane, taking them in his arms in order to lift them up on Hortensia's bed, "embrace your mother, and prevail on her tenderness to vouchsafe to share the cares which I shall take to bring you up." Hortensia pressed them to her bosom, and bathed them with her tears. "Till Nature," continued Lufane, "grant me the title of father, love and friendship give it me, and I am going to fulfil its duties." "Come, my love," said Hortensia, "this is to me the dearest and tenderest of all your lessons. I had forgot that I was a mother. I was going to forget that I was a wife. You recal me to those duties; and those two bands united bind me for all my life."



THE



THE CONNOISSEUR.

CELICOUR, from the age of fifteen, had been in the country what is called a little prodigy. He made the most gallant verses in the world. There was not in the neighbourhood one handsome woman whom he had not celebrated, and who had not found out that his eyes had still more spirit than his verses. It was pity to suffer such great talents to ly buried in a little country-town: Paris ought to be their theatre, and he managed so well that his father resolved to send him there. This father was an honest man, who loved wit without having any himself, and who admired, without knowing why, every thing that came from the capital; he had even some literary relations there, and in the number of his correspondents was a *Connoisseur*, called *M. de Fintac*. It was particularly to him that Celicour was recommended.

Fintac received the son of his friend with the kindness of one who takes persons under his protection. "Sir," said he, "I have heard speak of you: I know that you have

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" had

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“ had success in the country ; but in the
“ country, believe me, the arts and letters
“ are yet in their infancy. Without taste,
“ wit and genius produce nothing but what is
“ deformed, and there is no taste but at
“ Paris. Begin then by persuading yourself
“ that you are but just born, and by forget-
“ ting all that you have learned.” “ What
“ would I not forget ?” said Celicour, cast-
ing his eyes on a niece of eighteen, whom the
Connoisseur had with him. “ Yes, Sir, it
“ is to-day that I begin to live. I know not
“ what charm breathes in these places : but it
“ unfolds in me faculties unknown to me be-
“ fore : I seem to myself to have acquired
“ new senses, a new soul.” “ Good !” cried
Fintac, “ there now is enthusiasm : he is born
“ a poet, and from this single stroke I war-
“ rant him one.” “ There is no poetry in
“ that,” replied Celicour ; “ it is plain and
“ simple nature.”—“ So much the better !
“ there is the true talent. And at what age
“ did you feel yourself animated with this di-
“ vine fire ?”—“ Alas, Sir, I have had some
“ sparks of it in the country, but I never ex-
“ perience there this lively and sudden heat
“ which penetrates me at this instant.” “ It is
“ the air of Paris,” said Fintac. “ It is the
“ air of your house,” said Celicour : “ I am
“ in the temple of the Muses.” The Con-
noisseur

noisseur found that this young man had happy dispositions.

Agathe, the most beautiful little wag that Love ever formed, lost not one word of this conversation ; and certain sly looks, a certain smile which played on her lips, gave Celicour to understand, that she did not mistake the double meaning of his replies. " I am greatly pleased with your father," added the Connoisseur, " for having sent you hither at an age when the mind is docile enough to receive right impressions ; but guard yourself against bad. You will find at Paris more false connoisseurs than good judges. Do not go and consult every body, and stick close to the instruction of a man who has never been mistaken in any thing." Celicour, who did not imagine that one might praise one's self with so much openness, had the simplicity to ask who that infallible man was ? " It is I, Sir," replied Fintac with a tone of confidence, " I, who have passed my life with all that the arts and letters have of greatest consideration ; I, who for these forty years have exercised myself in distinguishing, in things both of fancy and of taste, the real and permanent beauties, the beauties of mode and of convention. I say it because it is well known, and there is no vanity in agreeing to a known fact."

Extraordinary as this language was, Celicour hardly paid any attention to it. An object more interesting took up his thoughts. Agathe had sometimes deigned to lift up her eyes upon him, and those eyes seemed to tell him the most obliging things in the world; but was it their natural vivacity, or the pleasure of seeing their triumph, that animated them? That was a point to be cleared up. Celicour begged therefore the Connoisseur to permit him to have the honour of visiting him often, and Fintac invited him to it himself.

In the second visit, the young man was obliged to wait till the Connoisseur was visible, and to pass a quarter of an hour *tête à tête* with the lovely niece. She made him many excuses, and he replied that there was no occasion for them. "Sir," said Agathe to him, "my uncle is charmed with you."—"That is a very pleasing piece of success to me; but, Madam, there is one which would touch me more."—"My uncle says you are formed to succeed in every thing."—"Ah! why do not you think the same!"—"I am pretty often of my uncle's opinion."—"Assist me then to merit his kindness."—"You seem to me to want no assistance."—"Pardon me; I know that great men have almost all of them their singularities, sometimes even weaknesses. To flatter their tastes,

“tastes, their opinions, their temper, one
“must know them; to know them one must
“study them; and, if you please, beautiful
“Agathe, you can abridge that study for me,
“After all, what is the point? To gain the
“good-will of your uncle? Nothing in the
“world is more innocent.”—“It is the cus-
“tom then in the country to come to an un-
“derstanding with the nieces, in order to
“succeed with the uncles? That is very dex-
“terous.”—“Nothing in it but what is very
“natural.”—“But if my uncle had, as you
“say, singularities and foibles, must one tell
“you of them?”—“Why not? Would you
“suspect me of wanting to make an ill use of
“them?”—“No; but his niece!” . . . —
“Very well, his niece ought to wish that they
“should seek to please him. He is past the
“time of life in which we correct ourselves;
“nothing remains then but to manage him.”
—“An admirable remover of scruples.”—
“Ah! you would not have any if you knew
“me better; but no, you have dissembled.”
—“Truly, I see the gentleman for the second
“time; how can I have any secrets from
“him?”—“I am indiscreet, I confess it,
“and I ask you pardon.”—“No, it is I who
“have been wrong, to leave you to believe
“the thing to be more serious than it is. The
“fact is this: my uncle is a good man, and
“would

“ would never have been any thing more, if
 “ they had not put it into his head to pretend
 “ to know every thing, to judge of the arts
 “ and letters, to be the guide, the estimator
 “ and the arbiter of talents. That does harm
 “ to no body; but it draws to our house a
 “ crowd of blockheads, whom my uncle pro-
 “ tects, and with whom he shares the ridi-
 “ cule of being a wit. It were much to be
 “ wished for his own ease that he would aban-
 “ don this chimera; for the public seem to
 “ have made it their business never to be of
 “ his opinion, and we have every day some
 “ new scene.” — “ You afflict me.” — “ You
 “ are now in possession of all the secrets of the
 “ family, and we have nothing more to con-
 “ ceal from you.” Just as she finished, word
 was brought to Celicour that the Connoisseur
 was visible.

— The study into which he was introduced
 announced the multiplicity of his studies and
 the variety of his knowledge: the floor was
 covered with folios piled up on one another in
 the utmost confusion, rolls of prints, maps
 lying open, and manuscripts jumbled toge-
 ther; on a table, a Tacitus open near a se-
 pulchral lamp furrounded by antique medals;
 farther off, a telescope on its carriage, the
 sketch of a picture on the easel, a model of
 bas-relief in wax, scraps of natural history;
 and

and in the fret-work of the ceiling, representations of books picturesquely overturned. The young man knew not where to set his foot, and his embarrassment gave the Connoisseur infinite pleasure. "Forgive," said he to him, "the confusion in which you find me: This is my study, I have occasion for all these things at hand: but do not imagine that the same disorder reigns in my head: every thing there is in its place; the variety, nay the number itself, causes no confusion there." "Wonderful!" said Celicour, who knew not what he said, for his thoughts were still on Agathe. "O, very wonderful!" replied Fintac; "and I am often surprised myself when I reflect on the mechanism of the memory, and the manner in which the ideas class and arrange themselves as fast as they arise: it seems as if there were drawers for every different kind of knowledge. For example, across that multitude of things which had passed through my imagination, who will explain to me how I came to retrace in my memory, to a given point, what I had read formerly on the return of the comet? for you are to know that it was I who gave the watch-word to our astronomers."—"You, Sir?"—"They never thought of it, and, but for me, the comet had passed *incognito* over our horizon."

" horizon. I have not boasted of it, as you
 " may plainly see: I tell it you in confi-
 " dence,"—" And why suffer yourself to be
 " deprived of the glory of so important a piece
 " of intelligence ?"—" Good ! I should ne-
 " ver have done if I were to claim back all
 " that they steal from me. In general, my
 " lad, know that a solution, a discovery, a
 " piece of poetry, of painting, or of elo-
 " quence, belong not, so much as is ima-
 " gined, to the person who takes the credit
 " of it to himself. But what is the object of
 " a connoisseur ! To encourage talents, at
 " the same time that he enlightens them.
 " Whether the thought of this bas-relief, the
 " disposition of this picture, the beauties of
 " the parts or the whole of this play, be the
 " artist's or mine, is matter of indifference
 " to the progress of the art ; now that is all
 " my concern. They come, I tell them my
 " thought ; they listen to me, they make
 " their advantage of it. It is excellent : I
 " am recompensed when they have succeeded."
 " Nothing finer," said Celicour : " the arts
 " ought to regard you as their Apollo. And
 " does Mademoiselle Agathe condescend to
 " be also their muse ?"—" No, my niece is a
 " madcap, whom I wanted to bring up with
 " care ; but she has no taste for study. I had
 " engaged her to cast her eye over history ;
 " she

“ He returned me my books, saying that it
“ was not worth while to read, for the sake
“ of seeing in all ages illustrious madmen and
“ rogues sporting with a crowd of fools. I
“ wanted to try if she had a greater taste for
“ eloquence: she pretended that Cicero, De-
“ mosthenes, &c. were dexterous jugglers;
“ and when one had good reasons, there was
“ no need of so many words. For morality,
“ she maintains that she knows it all by heart,
“ and that Lucas, her foster-father, is as
“ wise as Socrates. There is nothing there-
“ fore but poetry that amuses her sometimes;
“ and then she prefers fables to the more sub-
“ lime poems, and tells you plainly that she
“ had rather hear Fontaine’s animals speak,
“ than the heroes of Virgil and Homer. In
“ a word, she is at eighteen as much a child
“ as at twelve; and in the midst of the most
“ serious, the most interesting conversations,
“ you would be surprised to see her amusing
“ herself with a trifle, or growing dull the
“ moment one would captivate her attention.”
Celicour, laughing within himself, took leave
of M. de Fintac, who did him the favour to
invite him to dine with him the next day.

The young man was so transported, that he
slept not that night. To dine with Agathe!
it was the happiest day of his life. He arrives,
and by his beauty, by his youth, by the air of
serenity

serenity diffused over his countenance, one might have imagined we saw Apollo, if Fintac's Parnassus had been better composed; but as he wanted none but dependents and flatterers, he drew to his house only such persons as were fit to be so.

He introduced Celicour to them as a young poet of the greatest expectation, and made him take his place at table at his right hand. From that moment behold all the eyes of envy fixed upon him. Each of the guests thought he saw his own place usurped, and swore in the bottom of their souls to take their revenge on him by decrying the first work he should publish. In the mean time Celicour was graciously received, caressed by all these gentlemen, and took them from that instant, for the most honest people in the world. A new comer excited emulation: Wit hoisted all her sails: they judged the republic of letters; and as it is just to mingle commendation with criticism, they praised generously all the dead, and tore in pieces the living, the present company always excepted. All the new works which had succeeded without passing under the inspection of Fintac, could but have their day, and that a short one; all those to which he had given the seal of his approbation, were to attain to immortality, whatever the present age thought of them. They ran through all kinds

kinds of literature; and in order to give more scope to erudition and criticism, they brought on the carpet this entirely new question, *viz.* "Which merited the preference, Corneille or "Racine?" They said also on the subject the finest things in the world, when the little niece, who had not spoke a word, took it into her head to ask simply which of the two fruits, the orange or the peach, had the most exquisite taste, and merited the most commendation? Her uncle blushed at her simplicity, and the guests all looked down without deigning to reply to this idle foolery. "Niece" said Fintac, "at your age one should hear and "hold one's tongue." Agathe, with an imperceptible half-smile, looked at Celicour, who had understood her perfectly well, and whose glance consoled her for the contempt of the company. I forgot to mention that he was placed opposite to her, and you may easily imagine that he listened very little to what was said around him. But the Connoisseur, who examined his countenance, perceived in it a very extraordinary fire. "See," said he to his geniusses, "see how talent pierces." "Yes," replied one of them, "we see it "transpire like water through the pores of "an eolipile." Fintac, taking Celicour by the hand, said to him, "There is a comparison now! Poetry and Philosophy blended

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“ together ! It is thus that the talents border on each other, and that the Muses join hands. Confess,” continued he, “ that such dinners are not found in your country-towns ; and yet you see nothing : there are days, when these gentlemen have even a hundred times more wit.” “ It would be hard not to have it,” said one of them : “ we are at the fountain-head, *et purpureo bibimus ore nectar.*” “ Ah ! *purpureo !*” replied Fintac modestly ; “ you do me a great deal of honour.” — “ Hark, young man, learn to quote.” The young man was very attentive to catch in their passage Agathe’s looks, who on her side thought him very handsome.

On rising from table they went to walk in the garden, where the Connoisseur had taken care to get together the rare plants from all quarters. He had, among other wonders, a party-coloured cabbage, which drew the admiration of naturalists. Its folds, its festoon, the mixture of its colours, was the most astonishing thing in the world. “ Let them show,” said Fintac, “ a foreign plant which Nature has taken the trouble to form with more labour and delicacy. It is for the sake of avenging Europe on the prejudice of certain *virtuosi* in favour of every thing that comes

" comes from the Indies and the new world,
" that I have preserved this fine cabbage."

While they were admiring this prodigy, Agathe and Celicour had joined each other, as it were, without intending it, in a neighbouring walk. " Beautiful Agathe," said the young man, showing her a rose, " would you let this flower die on the stalk?" — " Where then would you have it die?" — " Where I would die myself." Agathe blushed at this answer; and in that instant her uncle, with two wits, came and seated themselves in an adjacent arbour, from whence, without being perceived, he could overhear them. " If it is true," continued Celicour, " that souls pass from one body into another, I wish after my death to be such a rose as that. If any profane hand advances to gather me, I will conceal myself amid the prickles; but if some charming nymph deigns to cast her eyes on me, I will lean towards her, expand my bosom, exhale my perfumes, mingle them with her breath; the desire of pleasing her shall animate my colours." — " Very well, you will do so much that you will be plucked off your stalk, and the moment after you will be no more." — " Ah, Madam, do you count as nothing the happiness of being one moment . . . " His eyes finished saying what his

mouth had begun. "And I," said Agathe, disguising her confusion, "if I had my choice, would wish to be changed into a dove, which is gentleness and innocence itself." — "Add to these tenderness and fidelity: yes, beautiful Agathe, the choice is worthy of you. The dove is the bird of Venus; Venus would distinguish you among your fellows; you would be the ornament of her car; Love would repose himself on your wings, or rather he would cherish you in his bosom. It would be from his divine mouth that your bill would take ambrosia." Agathe interrupted him, saying, that he carried his fictions too far. "One word more, said Celicour: "a dove has a mate; if it depended on you to chuse yours, what kind of a soul would you give him?" "That of a she-friend," replied she. At these words Celicour fixed on her two eyes, in which were painted love, reproach, and grief. "Very well!" said the uncle, getting up, "very well! there now is fine and good poetry for you. The image of this rose is of a freshness worthy Van-huysum, that of the dove is a little picture of Boucher, the freshest, the most gallant in the world, *ut pictura poesis*. Courage, my lad courage! the allegory is extremely well supported; we shall make something of you. Agathe,

"I

"I have been pretty well pleased with your dialogue, and here is M. de Lexergue, who is as much surpris'd at it as I." "It is certain," said M. de Lexergue, "that there is in Miss's language something Anacreontic: It is the impression of her uncle's taste; he says nothing which is not stamped with the mark of sound antiquity." M. Lucide found in Celicour's fictions the *molle atque facetum*. "We must conclude this little scene," said Fintac; "we must put it into verse, it will be one of the prettiest things we have ever seen." Celicour said, that in order to complete it, he stood in need of Agathe's assistance; and, that the dialogue might have more ease and freedom in it, they thought it right to leave them alone. "To the dove, your mate, *the soul of a sbe friend!*" resumed Celicour: "Ah beautiful Agathe, is your heart made only for friendship? Is it for that love has delighted to re-unite in you so many charms?" "There now," said Agathe, smiling, "is the dialogue excellently well renewed. I have but to take the reply: there is matter enough to carry us a great way." "If you please," said Celicour, "it is easy to abridge it." "Let us talk of something else," interrupted she. "Did the dinner amuse you?" — "I heard there but one single word full of sense and

“ refinement, which they had the folly to take
“ for a simple question ; all the rest escaped
“ me. My soul was not at my ear.”—
“ It was very happy !”—“ Ah ! very happy !
“ for it was in my eyes.” —“ If I pleased, I
“ might pretend not to hear, or not to under-
“ stand you ; but I never put on disguise. I
“ think it then very natural, under favour of
“ our wits, for you to take more pleasure in
“ looking at me than in listening to them ;
“ and I confess to you, in my turn, that I
“ am not sorry at having one to speak to me,
“ though it were only by his eyes, in order
“ to save me from the spleen that they give
“ me. Now then we are come to a right
“ understanding, and we shall amuse our-
“ selves, for we have originals, entertaining
“ enough in their kind. For example, this
“ M. Lucide thinks he always sees in things
“ what nobody else has perceived in them.
“ He seems as if Nature had told her secret
“ in his ear ; but every body is not worthy
“ to know what he thinks. He chuses in a
“ circle a privileged confident. This is com-
“ monly the most distinguished person ; he
“ leans mysteriously towards that person, and
“ whispers his opinion. As for M. de Lex-
“ ergue, he is a scholar of the first class : full
“ of contempt for every thing modern, he
“ esteems things by the number of ages. He
“ would

“ would chuse even that a young woman
“ should have the air of antiquity, and he
“ honours me with his attention, because he
“ thinks I have the profile of the Empress
“ Popæa. In the groupe which you see be-
“ low there, is an upright starch man, who
“ makes pretty little nothings; but does not
“ know what he means by them. He de-
“ mands a day for reading; he names his
“ own auditory himself; he requires that the
“ gate should be shut against every profane
“ person; he arrives on his tip-toes, places
“ himself before a table between two flam-
“ beaus; draws mysteriously out of his poc-
“ ket a rose-coloured porte-folio; throws a-
“ round him a gracious look, which demands
“ silence; announces a little romance of his
“ own making, which has had the good for-
“ tune to please some persons of considera-
“ tion; reads it deliberately, in order to be
“ the better tasted, and goes quite to the end,
“ without perceiving that every one yawns
“ within himself at him. That little fidget-
“ ing man near him, so full of gesticulation,
“ excites in me a pity which I am not able
“ to express. Wit is to him like those
“ sneezings which are going to come, but
“ which never do come. We see him dying
“ with the desire of saying fine things; he
“ has them at his tongue’s end; but they
“ seem

“ seem to escape him the moment he is going
 “ to catch them. Ah ! he is a man much to
 “ be pitied ! That dry and tall man, who
 “ walks alone, apart from them, is the most
 “ thoughtful and most empty person I know :
 “ because he has a bob-wig, and the black
 “ vapours, he thinks himself an English phi-
 “ losopher : he grows heavy on the wing of
 “ a fly, and he is so obscure in his ideas, that
 “ one is sometimes tempted to think him pro-
 “ found.”

While Agathe's wit was exercising itself
 on these characters, Celicour had his eyes
 fixed on her's “ Ah !” said he, “ that your
 “ uncle, who knows so many things, should
 “ know so little of his niece's understanding !
 “ he represents you as a child !”—“ Oh to
 “ be sure, and these gentlemen all consider
 “ me as such. Accordingly they put no re-
 “ straint upon themselves, and the absurdity
 “ of wit is with me quite at its ease. Do
 “ not go now and betray me at least.”——
 “ Never fear ; but we must, beautiful Agathe,
 “ cement our understanding by stricter ties
 “ than those of friendship.” “ You do injus-
 “ tice to friendship,” replied Agathe ; “ there
 “ is perhaps something sweeter ; but there is
 “ nothing more solid.”

At these words they came to interrupt them,
 and the Connoisseur walking along with Celi-
 cour,

cour, asked him if the dialogue with his niece had been cleverly resumed. "It is not precisely what I wanted," said the young man, "but I will endeavour to supply it." "I am sorry," says Fintac, "that we interrupted you. Nothing is so difficult as to recover the natural thread, when once we let it escape. It is apparently this giddy girl that has not caught your idea. She has sometimes lights; but all on a sudden they vanish. I must hope, at least, that marriage will form her." "You think then of marrying her?" demanded Celicour, with a faltering voice. "Yes," replied Fintac, "and I depend upon you for the worthy celebration of that festival. You have seen M. de Lexergue; he is a man of great sense and profound erudition. It is to him that I give my niece." If Fintac had observed Celicour's countenance, he would have seen it grow pale at this news. "A man so serious, and so full of application, as M. de Lexergue, has need," continued he, "of something to dissipate him. He is rich; he has taken a liking to this girl; and in a week's time he is to marry her; but he affects the greatest secrecy, and my niece herself knows nothing of it yet. As for you, it is highly necessary that you should be initiated into the mystery of an union which you
"are

"are to celebrate. *O Hymen! o Hymenæ!*
 "you understand me. It is an epithalamium
 "that I ask of you, and here now is the mo-
 "ment for you to signalise yourself."—"Ah!
 "Sir!"—"No modesty: it smothers
 "all talents."—"Excuse me."—"You
 "shall execute it: it is a piece in your own
 "way, and which will do you a great deal
 "of honour. My niece is young and hand-
 "some, and with an imagination and soul,
 "one is not exhausted on such a subject.
 "With respect to the husband, I have already
 "told you, he is an extraordinary man. No-
 "body is so knowing in antiques. He has
 "a cabinet of medals which he values at for-
 "ty thousand crowns. He was even going
 "to see the ruins of Herculæum, and was
 "very near making a voyage to Palmyra. You
 "see how many images all this presents to
 "poetry. But what do I say? you are ru-
 "minating upon it already; yes, I see on
 "your countenance that profound meditation
 "which hatches the buds of genius, and dis-
 "poses them to fruitfulness. Go quickly, go
 "and profit of such precious moments. I
 "am going also to bury myself in study."

Seised with consternation at all that he had
 just heard, Celicour burned with impatience
 to see Agathe again. The next day he made
 a pretence to go and consult the Connoisseur;

and

and before he went into his study, he asked if she was to be seen. "Ah! Mademoiselle," said he to her, "you see a man driven to despair."—"What ails you then?"—"I am undone; you are to marry M. de Lexergue."—"who has told you that story?"—"Who? M. de Fintac himself."—"Seriously?"—"He has charged me to write your epithalamium."—"Very well, will it be a pretty one?"—"You laugh! you think it charming to have M. de Lexergue for a husband!"—"Oh! very charming!"—"Ah! at least, cruel maid, in pity to me who adore you, and who am to lose you! " Agathe interrupted him as he fell on his knees. "Confess," said she to him, "that these moments of distraction are convenient for a declaration: as the person that makes it is not himself, so she who hears him dares not complain, and, by favour of this disorder, love thinks it may risque every thing. But softly, moderate yourself, and let us see what it is distracts you."—"Your tranquillity, cruel as you are."—"You would have me then afflict myself at a misfortune, which I am not afraid of?"—"I tell you that it is determined that you shall marry M. de Lexergue."—"How would you have them determine, without me, on that which, with-

"out

"out me, cannot be put in execution?"—

"But if your uncle has given his word?"—

"If he has given it, he shall retract it."

—"How, would you have the courage!"

—"The courage of not saying *yes!* a fine

"effort of resolution!"—"Ah! I am at

"the summit of joy!"—"And your joy is

"a folly as well as your grief."—"You

"will not be M. de Lexergue's!"—"Very

"well, what then?"—"You will be mine."

—"Oh! to be sure, there is no medium,

"and every woman who will not be his wife

"will be yours; that is clear. Indeed you

"argue like a country poet. Go, go see my

"dear uncle, and take care that he has no sus-

"picion of the information that you have

"given me."

"Well, is the epithalamium in forward-

"ness?" said the Connoisseur to him, as soon

as he came into his presence.—"I have the

"plan in my head.—"Let us see?"—"I

"have taken the allegory of Time espousing

"Truth."—"The thought is beautiful; but

"it is gloomy; and besides Time is very old."

—"M. de Lexergue is an antiquary."—

"True; but we do not love to be told that

"we are as old as Time."—"Would you like

"the nuptials of Venus and Vulcan better?"—

"Vulcan? on account of bronzes and medals.

"No; the adventure of Mars is too disagree-

"able

“able to be recalled. You will find out, on
 “consideration, some thought still more hap-
 “py. But *à-propos* of Vulcan, will you
 “come this evening with us to see the essay of
 “an artificer whom I protect? It is some
 “Chinese rockets, of which I have given him
 “the composition; I have even added some-
 “thing to it; for I must always put in some-
 “thing of my own.” Celicour doubted not
 but Agathe would be of the party, and he re-
 paired thither with eagerness.

The spectators were seated; Fintac and his
 niece took up one window, and there remained
 on Agathe’s side a small space, which she had
 contrived to leave vacant without affectation.
 Celicour stole timorously into it, and leaped
 with joy on seeing himself so near Agathe. The
 uncle’s eyes were attentive to follow the flight
 of the rockets; Celicour’s were fixed upon the
 niece. The stars might have fallen from the
 heavens, and not have disturbed him. His
 hand met on the side of the window a hand
 softer than the down of flowers; a trembling
 seized him which Agathe must have perceived.
 The hand he touched scarce made a motion to
 withdraw itself; his made one to retain it;
 Agathe’s eyes turned upon him, and met his,
 which asked for pardon. She perceived that
 she should afflict him by withdrawing that be-
 loved hand; and whether through weakness

or pity, she thought proper to leave it immovable. This was a great deal, but it was not enough : Agathe's hand was shut, and Celicour's could not embrace it. Love inspired him with the courage to open it. Gods ! what was his surprise and joy, when he found her yield insensibly to this soft violence ! He holds Agathe's hand open in his, he presses it amorously ; conceive his felicity ! It is not yet perfect : the hand he presses replies not to his ; he draws it towards him, inclines towards her, and dares to rest it on his heart, which advances to meet it. It wants to get from him, he stops it, he holds it captive ; and love knows with what rapidity his heart beats under this timid hand. This was as a loadstone to her. O triumph ! O rapture ! It is no longer Celicour that presses it ; it is the hand itself that answers the beatings of Celicour's heart. Those who have never loved have never known this emotion, and even those who have loved have never tasted it but once. Their looks were mingled with that touching langour, which is the sweetest of all declarations, when the branch of the fireworks displayed itself in the air. Then Agathe's hand made a new effort to impress itself on the heart of Celicour ; and while around them they-applauded the glittering beauty of the rockets, our lovers, taken up with themselves, expressed by burning sighs
the

the regret of separation. Such was this dumb scene, worthy to be cited among the examples of eloquent silence.

From this moment their hearts understanding each other, there was no longer any secret between them : both tasted for the first time the pleasure of loving, and this blossom of sensibility is the purest essence of the soul. But love, which takes the complexion of characters, was timid and serious in Celicour ; lively, joyous, waggish, in Agathe.

However, the day appointed for informing her of her marriage with M. de Lexergue arrives. The antiquary comes to see her, finds her alone, and makes her a declaration of his love, founded on the consent of her uncle. " I know," said she raillyingly, " that you love me in profile ; but for me, I should like a husband that I could love in front, and to speak frankly, you are not the thing for me. You have, you say, my uncle's consent, but you shall not marry me without my own, and I believe I may assure you that you will not have it as long as I live." In vain did Lexergue protest to her that she united in her eyes more charms than the Venus de Medicis ; Agathe wished him antique Venuses, and assured him that she was not one. " You have your choice," said she to him, " to expose me to displease my uncle, or to spare me

“ that chagrin. You will afflict me in charging me with the rupture, you will oblige me by taking it upon you ; and the best thing we can do when we are not loved, is to endeavour not to be hated. I am your very humble servant.”

The antiquary was mortally offended at Agathe's refusal ; but out of pride he would have concealed it, if the reproach cast upon him of failing in his word had not extorted the confession from him. Fintac, whose authority and consideration were now brought into question, was enraged at the opposition of his niece, and did all that was possible to conquer it ; but he never could draw from her any other answer but that she was no medal, and he concluded by telling her in his passion, that she should never have any other husband. This was not the only obstacle to the happiness of our lovers, Celicour could hope for only part of a small inheritance ; and Agathe was entirely dependent on her uncle, who was now less than ever disposed to strip himself of his wealth for her. In happier times he might have taken upon him their little family affairs, but after this refusal of Agathe's it required a little miracle to engage him to it, and it was Love himself that wrought it.

“ Flatter my uncle,” said Agathe to Celicour ; “ intoxicate him with encomiums, and

“ care-

“carefully conceal from him that we are in love. For that purpose let us diligently avoid being found together, and content yourself with informing me of your conduct, *en passant*.” Fintac dissembled not to Celicour his resentment against his niece. “Can she have,” said he, “any secret inclination? If I knew it But no, she is a little fool, who loves nothing, and feels nothing. Ah! if she reckons upon my inheritance, she is mistaken: I know better how to dispose of my favours.” The young man, terrified at the menaces of the uncle, sought out the moment to inform the niece of it. She only rallied on the occasion.—“He is raving mad against you, my dear Agathe.”—“That is quite indifferent to me.”—“He says he will disinherit you.”—“Say as he says, gain his confidence, and leave the rest to love and time.” Celicour followed Agathe’s advice, and at every commendation that he bestowed on Fintac, Fintac thought he discovered in him a new degree of merit. “The justness of understanding, the penetration of this young man is without example at his age,” said he to his friends. At last the confidence he placed in him was such, that he thought he could trust to him what he called the secret of his life: this was a dramatic piece which he had composed, and which he

had not had the resolution to read to any one, for fear of risking his reputation. After demanding an inviolable secrecy, he appointed the time for reading it. At this news Agathe was transported with joy. "That is well," said she: "courage; redouble the dose of incense; good or bad, in your eyes this piece has no equal."

Fintac, *tête à tête* with the young man, after double locking his study-door, drew out of a casket this precious manuscript, and read with enthusiasm the coldest, the most insipid comedy that ever was. It cost the young man a deal of mortification to applaud flatnesses; but Agathe had recommended it to him. He applauded it therefore, and the Connoisseur was transported. "Confess," said he to him, after reading it, "confess that this is fine."—"Yes, very fine."—"Very well, it is time to tell you why I have chose you for my only confident. I have burnt with desire this great while to see this piece on the stage, but I would not have it go under my name. (Celicour trembled at these words) "I was unwilling to trust any body; but in short I think you worthy of this mark of my friendship: you shall present my work as your own; I will have nothing but the pleasure of the success, and I leave the glory of it to you." The thought of imposing upon the public

public would alone have terrified the young man, but that of seeing appear, and being damned under his name, so contemptible a work, shocked him still more. Confounded at the proposal, he withstood it a long time, but his opposition was to no purpose. "My secret being confided," said Fintac to him, "engages you in honour to grant me what I ask. It is indifferent to the public whether the piece be yours or mine, and this friendly imposition can hurt no body in the world. My piece is my treasure, I make you a present of it: the very remotest posterity will know nothing of it. Here then your delicacy is spared every way: if, after this, you refuse to present this work as your own, I shall think that you do not like it, that you only deceive me in praising it, and that you are equally unworthy of my friendship and of my esteem." What would not Agathe's lover resolve upon rather than incur the hatred of her uncle? He assured him that he was only restrained by laudable motives, and asked twenty-four hours to determine. "He has read it to me," said he to Agathe.--- "Well?"--- "Well, it is execrable."--- "I thought so."--- "He wants me to bring it on the stage in my name."--- "What say you?"--- "That he will have it pass for mine."--- "Ah, Celi-
cour, let us praise heaven for this adventure.

"Have

"Have you accepted it?"—"Not yet, but I
 "shall be forced to it."—"So much the bet-
 "ter!"—"I tell you that it is detestable."—
 "So much the better still."—"It will be
 "damned."—"So much the better, I tell
 "you, we must submit to every thing."
 Celicour did not sleep through uneasiness and
 grief. The next day Celicour went to find
 the uncle, and told him, that there was no-
 thing which he would not sooner resolve upon
 than to displease him. "I would not said the
 "Connoisseur, "expose you rashly: copy
 "out the piece with your own hand, you
 "shall read it to our friends who are excellent
 "judges, and if they do not think the success
 "infallible, you are no longer bound to any
 "thing. I require only one thing of you, that
 "is to study it, in order to read it well."
 This precaution gave the young man some
 hope. "I am," said he to Agathe, "to read
 "the piece to his friends; if they think it bad,
 "he excuses me from bringing it out."—
 "They will think it good, and so much the
 "better: we should be undone if they were
 "to dislike it."—"Explain yourself, pray."
 —"Get you gone, they must not see us to-
 "gether." What she had foreseen come to
 pass. The judges being assembled, the Con-
 noisseur announced this piece as a prodigy,
 and especially in a young poet, The young
 poet

poet read his best, and after Fintac's example, they were in ecstasies at every line, they applauded every scene. At the conclusion they clapped and huzzaed; they discovered in it the delicay of Aristophanes, the elegance of Plautus, the comic force of Terence, and they knew of no piece of Moliere fit to be set in competition with this. After this trial there was no longer room to hesitate. The players were not of the same opinion with the wits; for they knew before hand that these good people had no taste, but there was an order to perform the piece. Agathe, who had assisted at the reading, had applauded it with all her might; there were even pathetic passages at which she appeared to be moved, and her enthusiasm for the work had a little reconciled "her with the author. "Could it be possible," said Celicour to her, "that you should have thought that good?" Excellent," said she, "excellent for us;" and at these words she left him without saying more. While the piece was in rehearsal, Fintac ran from house to house to dispose the wits in favour of a young poet of such great expectation. At last the great day arrives, and the Connoisseur assembles his friends to dinner. "Let us go, Gentlemen," said he, "support your own performance. "You have judged the piece admirable, you have warranted the success, and your honour

"is.

" is concerned. As to me, you know how
 " great my weakness is: I have the bowels of
 " a father for all rising geniuses, and I feel in
 " as lively a manner as themselves the uneasinesses
 " they suffer in those terrible moments."

After dinner, the good friends of the Connoisseur embraced Celicour tenderly; and told him that they were going into the pit to be the witnesses rather than instruments of his triumph. They repaired there in reality; the piece was played; it was not finished, and the first mark of impatience was given by these good friends.

Fintac was in the house, trembling and pale as death; but all the time that the play lasted, this unhappy and tender father made incredible efforts to encourage the spectators to succour his child. In short he saw it expire, and then sinking beneath his grief, he dragged himself to his coach, confounded, dejected, and murmuring against heaven for having been born in so barbarous an age. And where was the poor Celicour? Alas, they had granted him the honours of a latticed box, where, on a bundle of thorns, he had seen what they called his piece, tottering in the first act, stumbling in the second, and tumbling in the third. Fintac had promised to go and take him up, but had forgot it. What was now to become of him? how escape through that
 multitude

multitude who would not fail to know him again, and to point him out with the finger ? At last seeing the front empty, he took courage and descended ; but the stove-rooms, the galleries, the stairs were yet full ; his consternation made him be taken notice of, and he heard on all sides, “ It is he without doubt ; “ yes, there he is, it is he. Poor wretch ! it “ is pity ! He will do better another time.” He perceived in a corner a groupe of damaned authors cracking jests on their companion. He saw also the good friends of Fintac, who triumphed in his fall, and on seeing him turned their backs upon him. Overwhelmed with confusion and grief, he repaired to the true author’s, and his first care was to ask for Agathe : he had entire liberty of seeing her, for her uncle had shut himself up in his closet. “ I forewarned you of it : it is fallen, and “ fallen shamefully,” said Celicour throwing him into a chair. “ So much the better,” said Agathe.—“ What, so much the better ! “ when your lover is covered with shame, and “ makes himself, in order to please you, the “ talk and ridicule of all Paris ? Ah, it is “ too much. No, Mademoiselle, it is no “ longer time to jest. I love you more than “ my life ; but in the state of humiliation in “ which you now see me, I am capable of re- “ nouncing both life and yourself. I do not “ know

“ know how it has happened that the secret
“ has not escaped me. It is little to expose
“ myself to the contempt of the public,
“ your cruel uncle leaves me there ! I know
“ him, he will be the first to blush at seeing
“ me again ; and what I have done to obtain
“ you, perhaps, cuts off my hope for ever.
“ Let him prepare, however, to resume his
“ piece, or to give me your hand. There is
“ but one way to console me, and to oblige
“ me to silence. Heaven is my witness, that
“ if through an impossibility, his work had
“ succeeded, I should have given to him the
“ honour of it ; it is fallen, I bear the shame,
“ but it is an effort of love for which you
“ alone can be the recompence.” “ It must
“ be confessed,” said the wicked Agathe, in
order to irritate him still more, “ that it is
“ a cruel thing to see one’s self hissed for a-
“ nother.”—“ Cruel to such a degree that I
“ would not play such a part for my own
“ father.”—“ With what an air of con-
“ tempt they see a wretch pass along whose
“ play is damned !”—“ The contempt is un-
“ just, we console ourselves for that ; but the
“ insolent pity, there is the mortification.”
—“ I suppose you were greatly confused in
“ coming down stairs ! Did you salute the
“ ladies ?”—“ I could have wished to anni-
“ hilate myself.”—“ Poor boy ! and how
“ will

“ will you dare to appear again in the world ? ”
 —“ I will never appear again, I swear to you,
 “ but with the name of your husband, or
 “ till after I have retorted on Mr. de Fintac
 “ the humiliation of this failure.” —“ You
 “ are fully resolved then to drive him to
 “ the wall ? ” ---“ very fully resolved, do not
 “ doubt it. Let him determine this very
 “ evening. If he refuses me your hand, all
 “ the news-papers shall publish that he is the
 “ author of the damned piece.” “ And
 “ that is what I wanted,” said Agathe with
 triumph; “ there is the object of all those
 “ *so much the betters* which put you so much
 “ out of patience, Go see my uncle; hold
 “ firm, and be assured that we shall be
 “ happy.”

“ Very well, Sir, what say you to it ? ”
 demanded Celicour of the Connoisseur.” —
 “ I say, my friend, that the publick is a
 “ stupid animal, and that we must renounce
 “ all labour for it. But console yourself:
 “ your work does you honour in the opinion
 “ of men of taste.” —“ What do you call
 “ my work? it is all your’s.” “ Talk lower,
 “ I beseech you, my dear lad, talk lower.”
 —“ It is very easy for you to moderate your-
 “ self, Sir, you who have prudently saved
 “ yourself from the fall of your piece; but I,
 “ I whom it crushes....” ---“ Ah ! do not think

“ that such a fall does you an injury. The
“ more enlightened persons have observed in
“ this work strokes that proclaim genius.”
—“ No, Sir, I do not flatter myself, the
“ piece is bad: I have purchased the right of
“ speaking of it with freedom, and all the
“ world are of the same opinion. If it had
“ had a complete success, I should have de-
“ clared that it was your’s; if it had been
“ but partly condemned, I should have taken
“ it upon myself; but so thorough a dam-
“ nation is above my strength, and I beg
“ of you to take the burthen upon you.”
---“ I, child! I, on my decline, I, take this
“ ridicule! To lose in one day a respect
“ which is the work of forty years, and
“ which forms the hope of my old-age!
“ would you really have the cruelty to require
“ it?”—“ Have not you the cruelty to
“ render me the victim of my complaisance?
“ You know how much it has cost me.”—
“ I know all that I owe to you; but, my
“ dear Celicour, you are young, you have
“ the time to take revenge, and there needs
“ but one instance of success to make you
“ forget this misfortune: in the name of
“ friendship support it with constancy, I con-
“ jure you with tears in my eyes.”—“ I
“ consent to it, Sir, but I perceive too well
“ the consequences of this first essay, to ex-
“ pose

“pose myself to the prejudice which it leaves
“behind it : I renounce the theatre, poetry,
“the belles-lettres.” — “Yes, it is well
“done : there are for a young man of your
“age so many other objects of ambition.”
—“There is but one for me, Sir, and that
“depends on you.” — “Speak, there is no
“service which I would not do you : what
“do you require ?” — “Your niece’s hand.”
—“Agathe’s hand !” — “Yes, I adore her,
“and it was she, who to please you made me
“consent to every thing that you desired.” —
“My niece in the secret ?” — “Yes, Sir.”
—“Ah ! her giddiness will perhaps... Hola !
“somebody : run to my niece, and bid her
“come here.” — Compose yourself : Agathe
“is less a child, less giddy than she appears.”
—“Ah you make me tremble. . . . My dear
“Agathe, you know what has passed, and the
“misfortune which has just happened.” —
“Yes, uncle.” — “Have you revealed this
“fatal secret to any one ?” — “To no body
“in the world.” — “Can I thoroughly de-
“pend upon it ?” — “Yes, I swear to you.”
—“Well then, my children, let it die with
“us three : I ask it of you as I would ask my
“life. Agathe, Celicour loves you ; he re-
“nounces, out of friendship to me, the
“theatre, poetry, letters, and I owe him
“your hand as the price of so great a sacri-
“fice.”

"fice." "He is too well paid," cried Celicour seizing Agathe's hand. "I marry
 "an unsuccessful author," said she smiling,
 "but I engage to console him for his misfortune. The worst of the matter is that
 "they deny him wit, and so many honest
 "people are contented without it! Now
 "there, my dear uncle, see, Celicour renounces the glory of being a poet: would not
 "you do well to renounce that of being a
 "Connoisseur? You will be a great deal the
 "easier for it." Agathe was interrupted by the arrival of Clement, the faithful valet of her uncle. "Ah, Sir," said he quite out of breath, "your friends! your good friends!"
 — "Well, Clement?"—"I was in the pit,
 "they were all there."—"I know it well.
 "Did they applaud?"—"Applaud! the
 "traitors! If you had seen with what fury
 "they mangled this unfortunate young man.
 "I beg, Sir, you would discharge me, if such
 "people are ever to enter your house again."
 "Ah the rascals! scoundrels!" said Fintac.
 "Yes, it is done, I will burn my books, and
 "break off all commerce with these men of
 "letters." "Keep your books for your amusement," said Agathe embracing her
 uncle; "and with respect to men of letters,
 "wish to have none but your friends, and
 "you will find some worthy of esteem."

THE



THE SCHOOL OF FATHERS.

THE misfortune incident to a father taken up in raising a fortune for his children, is not to be able to watch himself over their education, a point of still more consequence than their fortune. The young Timantes, called M. de Volny, had received from nature an agreeable figure, an easy temper, a good heart; but thanks to the cares of the good lady his mother, this happy disposition was soon spoiled and the most agreeable child in the world at six years old, became a little coxcomb at fifteen. They gave him all the frivolous accomplishments, and not one of the useful ones: useful knowledge might be good for a man like his father, who had been obliged to labour to enrich himself; but he who found his fortune made, need only know how to enjoy it nobly. They had laid it down to him as a maxim, that he was never to live with his equals; accordingly he saw none but young people, who being superior to him in birth, pardoned his being richer than they, provided he paid for their pleasures.

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His father would not have had the complaisance to furnish supplies to his liberalities; but his mother did honour to them all. She was not ignorant that at the age of nineteen, he had, according to the genteel custom, a little house and a handsome mistress: one should pass over some things in him: she required only that he should observe a little secrecy in it, for fear that Timantes, who did not know *the world*, should take it ill that his son amused himself. If in the intervals of his labour the father shewed any uneasiness on account of the dissipated life which this young man led, the mother was at hand to justify him, and complaisant falsehoods were never wanting on occasion. Timantes had the pleasure to hear it said, that no body at the ball had danced like his son. "it is a great comfort," said the good man, "to have given one's self so much trouble for a son who dances well. He did not conceive why there was a necessity that this little signior should have lacqueys so finely dressed, and such a brilliant equipage; but his good lady wife represented to him, that respect depended on it, and that in order to succeed in the world, one must be on a certain footing. If he asked why his son came home so late, "It was," she told him, "because women of quality do not go

" to

“ to bed sooner.” He did not think these reasons very good ; but for the sake of peace, he was obliged to be contented with them. However, his son gave a loose to himself in the dissipations of his age, when love seemed to take pity of him, and to undertake his reformation.

His sister Lucy had had, for some little time past, in her convent, a charming companion. Angelica had lost her mother ; and being too young to keep house, she had prevailed upon her father to dispense with her, till the moment that he should dispose of her hand.

The conformity of age and condition, and, still more, that of tempers, soon united Angelica and Lucy. The latter, on wiping away the tears of her companion, appeared so sensible to the loss she had endured, that Angelica no longer observed any reserve in the effusion of her grief. “ I have lost,” said she to her, “ a mother such as never was before. “ Since I have had the use of my reason, I “ found in her a friend, and a friend so intimate, that if my heart and her virtues “ had not continually recalled to my mind the “ respect which I owed her, her familiarity “ would have made me forget it. She always “ disguised her instructions under an air “ of merriment ; and what instructions, my “ dear Lucy ! those of wisdom itself. With “ what

" what strokes was this world, in which I
 " was to live, painted to my astonished eyes!
 " What charms did she give to the pure and
 " modest manners of which she was a living
 " example ! Ah, under her enchanting pen-
 " cil all the Virtues became Graces." Thus
 did this amiable daughter, when speaking of
 her mother, continually mingle with the most
 tender regrets the most touching eulogies ; but
 her understanding and her soul praised still more
 worthily the person who had formed them.
 If any one about her wanted those comforts
 which ease of circumstances gives, Angelica
 deprived herself of them with joy ; the sacri-
 fices cost her only the trouble of concealing
 them, and the want of obliging was the only
 want she knew. " Do you think like me?"
 said she sometimes to Lucy. " More happy
 " than our companions, that inequality mor-
 " tifies me, and I blush for Fortune who has
 " distributed her gifts so ill. If any thing
 " makes the unhappy amends, it is that they
 " are pitied and beloved ; whereas to us,
 " whom they might envy, they make it a fa-
 " vour if they do not hate us. Accordingly
 " we ought to be very attentive to make them
 " forget by beneficence and modesty this dan-
 " gerous advantage which we have over our
 " companions."

Lucy, charmed with the disposition of An-
 gelica,

gelica, could have wished to attach herself to her by all the bands of affection. "My dear friend," said she to her one day, "we touch perhaps on the moment when we may be separated for ever : this reflexion creates all the unhappiness of my life ; but I have one, if you did but approve of it. . . . I want to show you my brother ; he is beautiful as the day, a very picture, and well accomplished." "He is very young," said Angelica, "and very much in the world for his age ! I am afraid your mother has been too fond of him."

Volny being come to see Lucy, she prevailed upon her friend to accompany her to the parlour. "Ah, my sister, what charms!" cried the young coxcomb. "Never was so much beauty : what features, what a figure, what eyes ! You in a convent, Made-moiselle ! It is robbery, treason." "I foresaw," said Lucy, "that you would be transported ; and yet her soul is a thousand times more beautiful."—"Sister, she has the look of the Marchioness of Alcine, whom I handed yesterday out of the opera. They cry up the figure of the countess of Flavel, whom I am to sup with this evening ; but there is no comparison between her person and this lady's ; and though I am the intimate friend

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“ friend of the young Madam de Blane’s,
 “ who passes for the beauty of the day,
 “ I will lay a thousand to one that your
 “ friend will eclipse her on appearing in the
 “ world.”

While Volny spoke thus, Angelica viewed him with the eyes of pity. “ Sir,” said she to him, “ you can have no doubt but your
 “ praises are insults. For, know, that the
 “ first sentiment that a virtuous woman ought
 “ to inspire, is the fear of wounding her
 “ modesty, and that it is not permitted to
 “ praise without reserve any but persons
 “ without shame.” “ There are transports of
 “ surprise which we cannot master,” replied Volney a little confused.—“ When respect
 “ accompanies them, it prevents them from
 “ breaking out. But I see that I afflict my
 “ friend in appearing offended with your address to me: I will console her, and put
 “ you at your ease. Beautiful or not, I am
 “ so little vain of an endowment with which
 “ we are often very contemptible, that I give
 “ you leave to say before me whatever you
 “ please; I will not have the vanity to blush
 “ at your praises.” One must be well accustomed,” said Volny, to be beautiful, and
 “ greatly superiour to that advantage, to speak
 “ of it with so much negligence. As for me
 “ I cannot persuade myself that beauty is so
 contemptible;

“ contemptible ; but since you take the homage that are paid it so ill, we must adore it in silence.” From that moment he spoke no longer but of himself, his horses, his friends, his suppers, and his intrigues. Lucy, who had her eyes on Angelica, saw with grief that all this hurt Volny.

“ It is pity,” said Angelica, when he was withdrawn, “ it is a great pity that they have spoiled him so early !” “ Confess, however,” said Lucy, “ that he is made up of graces.” —“ And of follies, my dear friend.” —“ He will correct them.” —“ No, for that absurdity succeeds at his age, and we are never disposed to correct ourselves of a fault which pleases.” —“ But he has seen you, he will love you ; and if he loves you, he will become wise.” —“ You do not doubt that I wish it ; but I am far from hoping it.”

Volny did not hesitate to believe that he had made a complete conquest. “ My sister was right,” said he, “ her friend is handsome ! a little singular ; but her disposition is only the more lively for it. The only thing wanting in her is birth : my mother will have me marry some young woman of quality. Let us visit her however ; this girl resembles nothing that we have in the great world, and she has at least sufficient charms to amuse.”

He

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He went therefore again to see his sister, and with her he again saw Angelica. “What have I done to you,” said he to Lucy, “that you have disturbed my repose? I was so easy! I amused myself so cleverly before I saw your dangerous friend! Ah Made-moiselle, how insipid is the world, and its amusements how cold to a heart taken up with you! Who would have told me that I should have been jealous of my sister? Mixed with the most brilliant company, solicited by all the pleasures, who could believe it? Yes, I wish to be in her place; she sees you, continually tells you that she loves you, hears you say that you love her” —“You have reason to envy my happiness; but, Volny, if you pleased, your’s would still be more deserving of envy.” (At these words Angelica blushed.) —“O heaven! sister! what do I hear!” —“I have said too much.” —“No, my dear Lucy: in virtuous sentiments there is nothing to be concealed. Your sister wishes that heaven may have destined us for each other, and I cannot but be obliged to her. Nay, more: I flatter myself with being born to make a good man happy, and nothing hinders but by your manners you might be such a man as my husband ought to be: you need only resemble your sister.” —“If

—“ If that be all, I am happy ; for they
“ flatter me that I am very like her.”—“ True,
“ they flatter you ; but I, who never flatter,
“ assure you it is no such thing. My Lucy
“ is not vain either of the graces of her un-
“ derstanding, or her figure.”—“ Ah, I pro-
“ test now that no body in the world is less
“ vain than I, and if I have merit, I know
“ nothing of it.”—“ Nothing is more simple
“ than Lucy’s manners ; she is nature itself in
“ all her candour. See if in her behaviour,
“ her language, her gesture, there is any thing
“ affected, any thing studied.”—“ She is
“ like me : for the sake of avoiding affecta-
“ tion I often fall into negligence ; I am told
“ of it every day.”—“ Lucy makes no pre-
“ tensions to any thing : wholly taken up with
“ the recommendation of others, herself is
“ the only person she forgets.”—“ And I,
“ whatever talents Nature may have given
“ me, do they see me vain of them, or pre-
“ sume upon them ? All the world says,
“ that I excell in every circumstance of the
“ agreeable ; I alone never mention it. Ah,
“ if it be modesty and simplicity which you
“ love in my sister, I am very sure that you
“ will love me : they are my favourite vir-
“ tues.” “ Would they were !” said An-
gelica ; “ however, if you have any design

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“ of

“of ever pleasing me, I advise you to examine yourself more closely.”

“You have given him,” said Lucy, “a lesson which he will not forget.”—“No, for he has forgot it already.” Angelica was in the right. All that he had drawn from their conversation was, that she liked him, and that she would be very glad to be his wife. “With what frankness,” said he, “did she make the declaration to me ! How well that candour becomes beauty !” Whether vanity or passion, he was really moved by it ; but this growing passion, if it was one, had no effect upon his manners. Intoxicated with the incense of his flatterers, agreeably deceived by a young enchantress, he forgot that they sold him the pains which they took to please him, and his vanity carested by the pleasures smiled carelessly upon them. This voluptuous softness is the most fatal languor into which a young man can be plunged. Except that, every thing is painful to him ; the lightest duties are fatiguing ; decorums the least austere are dull and troublesome ; he is not at his ease but in that state of indolence and liberty where every thing obeys him, nothing constrains him.

Sometimes the image of Angelica came to present itself to him as a dream. “She is charming,” said he ; “but what shall I do with her ? Nothing is more inconvenient than

"than a delicate and faithful wife to a husband who is not so. My father would expect that I should live only for my wife. There would be love, jealousy, reproaches, tears; all this frightens me: however I will see her again."

Lucy came alone this time. "Well, how does she like me?"—"A great deal too well."—"I thought so."—"Too well as to figure. That advantage makes you neglect, she says, more amiable qualities, which you would stand in need of without it."—"This Angelica of your's moralises a little, and 'tis pity. Tell her then that nothing is more dull, and that so pretty a mouth as her's is not made to talk reason." "It is not she," said Lucy, "it is you whom I would correct."—"And of what, pray? of loving pleasure, and every thing that inspires it?"—"Pleasure! is there one more pure than that of possessing the heart of a virtuous and beautiful woman, of loving, and of being loved? I believe that you are affectionate, Angelica has sensibility, every thing that belongs to me is dear to her; but . . ."—"But she is very difficult, and what is it she requires?"—"Morals."—"Morals at my age! and who has told her that I have none?"—"I don't know, but she has conceived a pre-
Z 2 "judice

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“judice against you that grieves me.”—
“Ah! I will bring her to herself again. Bring
“her to me, sister, bring her to me the
“first time I come to see you. It is to no
“purpose that men are discreet,” said he as
he was going away; “women cannot be
“silent; and with whatever care I conceal
“my intrigues, the secret comes out. But
“what hurt does that do me? If Angelica
“will have a husband who has always been
“chaste, she has nothing to do but to marry
“a fool or a child. Am I obliged to be faith-
“ful to a wife that is to be? Oh! I will
“make her see the folly of her notions.”

She appeared, and he was himself very much
humbled, very much confounded, when he
heard her speak with the eloquence of virtue
and reason on the shame and danger of vice.
“Can you think, Sir,” said she to him, af-
ter having let him treat as slightly as he plea-
sed the principles of good morals; “can you
“think, without blushing, on the union of
“a pure and chaste soul with one tarnished
“and profane by the most unworthy of all in-
“clinations? Of what value in your eyes
“would a heart be, debased by the vices of
“which you are vain? and do you think us
“less sensible than yourself to the charms of
“virtue, modesty and innocence? You have
“given yourself a dispensation from those laws
“which

“ which you have imposed upon us ; but
“ nature and reason are more equitable than
“ you. For me, I will never believe that a
“ man can dare to love me while he loves
“ things that are scandalous, and if he has had
“ the misfortune to be unworthy of me be-
“ fore knowing me, it is by the pains he shall
“ take to wipe away that blemish that I shall
“ see whether I ought to forget it.” Volny
wanted to make her understand, that by
changing condition we changed our conduct ;
that love, virtue, beauty, had numberless rights
over a soul ; and that the frivolous and tran-
sient pleasures which had before occupied that
indolent soul, would disappear before an ob-
ject more dear, and more worthy to possess
it. “ Have you faith, Sir,” said she, “ in
“ these sudden revolutions ? Do you know
“ that they suppose a soul naturally delicate
“ and noble ? that there are very few of this
“ temper ; and that it is not a good presage
“ of the change which you promise, to wait,
“ in the very bosom of vice, the moment of
“ becoming virtuous all on a sudden ?”

Volny, surprised and confounded at this se-
rious language, contented himself with telling
her that in all this he flattered himself there
was nothing personal. “ Pardon me,” said
Angelica, “ I have heard much talk of you.
“ I am besides pretty well acquainted with

“ the way of life of the young men of fa-
 “ shion : you are rich, of very extensive ac-
 “ quaintance, and, unless by a kind of prodi-
 “ gy, you must be more irregular than ano-
 “ ther. But the opinion which I have of you
 “ ought not to discourage you. You think
 “ you love me : I wish it : that perhaps will
 “ give you resolution and force to become a
 “ valuable man. You have a fine example,
 “ a father, who, without all the accomplish-
 “ ments which you are set off with, has ac-
 “ quired by talents useful to his country and
 “ himself, the highest reputation. There now
 “ is what I call an uncommon man ; and
 “ when you shall become worthy of him, I
 “ shall be proud of being worthy of you.”

This discourse had thrown Volny into se-
 rious reflections ; but his friends came to draw
 him out of them. He was expected at a deli-
 cious supper, at which Fatime, Doris, and
 Cloe were to be. Their joy there was lively
 and brilliant, and if Volny's heart did not
 give itself up to it, at least his senses did.

We may easily judge that in this polite
 circle, a serious engagement passed for the
 highest extravagance. “ When a person's
 “ fortune is concerned,” said they, “ it is time
 “ enough, we resolve on it ; but can a young
 “ man, born to a great fortune, can such a
 “ one be fool enough, or mad enough, to forge
 “ himself

“ himself a chain ? If he does not love his
“ wife, she is a burthen which he wantonly
“ imposes upon himself ; and if he loves her,
“ what a sad method of pleasing himself is that
“ of being her husband ! Is there in all the
“ world a more ridiculous creature than a
“ loving husband ? Suppose also that this
“ should succeed, what then ? They are plea-
“ sed for six months, to be dull all their lives.
“ Ah ! my dear Volny, no marriage : you
“ would be a lost man. If you have a fancy
“ for any honest girl, wait till another marries
“ her, that always comes round to us sooner or
“ later, and you will be happy in your turn.”
Would one believe that this unthinking young
man thought these reflections very wise ? “ See,
“ however,” said he, “ what empire virtue
“ and beauty have over a soul, since they
“ make it forget the care of its repose, and
“ the value of its liberty.”

He would fain not have seen Angelica again ;
but he was not well with himself, when he had
passed a few days without seeing her. Such
nevertheless is the attraction of libertinism,
that on quitting that adorable young lady, pe-
netrated, ravished, enchanted with her wisdom
and her charms, he plunged himself again in-
to the dissipations, of which she had made
him ashamed.

Is it possible that it can be a happiness to
a son

a son to lose his mother? Volny, at the death of his, thought he saw the source of all his foolish expences dried up; but it did not even come into his head to renounce those things which had engaged him in them, and the only care with which he was taken up, was to supply the means which he had lost to support them. Being the only son of so rich a father, he could not fail to be rich in his turn; and a young man finds at Paris a pernicious facility of anticipating his fortune. It was then that Timantes, on his decline, wanted to repose himself from his long fatigues, and to engage his son to take his place. “My father,” said the young man to him, “I do not think myself born for that.”—“Well, my son, would you rather take the profession of arms?”—“My inclination is not that way; and my birth does not oblige me to it.”—“The law, without doubt, pleases you better?”—“Oh! not at all, I have an invincible aversion for the law.”—“What will you be then?”—“My mother had in view an office which confers nobility, which requires no duty, and might be discharged at Paris.”—“I understand you, my son, I will think of it, an excellent vocation. Oh I see,” said the good man in himself, “that you would live an idle life; but I will hinder you if I can. An office which confers nobility,

“ nobility, and requires no duty ! very convenient. And why should I still wear myself out with labour and inquietude ? Let me repose, let me have no other care than that which I shall have taken up too late, the care of observing the conduct of a son who promises me nothing but sorrow ; for he who loves idleness, loves the vices of which idleness is the mother.”

But what was the affliction of Timantes when he learnt that his son, intoxicated with pride, and plunged in libertinism, gave into all kinds of irregularities ; that he had mistresses and flatterers ; that he gave shows and entertainments, and that he played at a rate sufficient to ruin him ? “ It is my fault,” said Timantes, “ and I must repair it, but how ? The habit is contracted : the relish for vice has made great progress. Shall I constrain this young man ? he will escape me. Shall I disavow his expences and debts ? that would be dishonouring myself, it would be extinguishing in his abased soul the very seeds of honesty. To shut him up is still worse : thank heaven, he is not come to that pass as to merit that the laws should deprive him of the natural right of being free, and there are none but unnatural parents who would be severer towards their children than the laws. In the mean time he is running on
“ to

" to his ruin ; what shall I do to draw him
 " from the precipice on which I see him ?
 " Let us go back to the source of the evil.
 " My riches have turned his head ; born of
 " a father without fortune, he had been like
 " another, modest, laborious, and prudent ;
 " the remedy is easy, and my course is tak-
 " en."

Timantes began from that time by settling
 his wealth in such a manner as that it should
 be detached, independent and free. Except-
 ing his estate of Volny, and his town-house,
 his fortune was all in his *porte folio*, and he
 took care to settle matters with all his corre-
 spondents. Things being thus disposed, he
 returns home one day in consternation. His
 son and his friends, who waited his coming to
 seat themselves at table, were struck with his
 dejection. One of them could not refrain from
 asking him the cause : " You shall know it,"
 said he ; " let us make a little haste, if you
 " please, to dine ; I am taken up with serious
 " affairs." They dined in profound silence,
 and Timantes at their getting up from table,
 having taken leave of his guests, shut himself up
 with his son. " Volny," said he to him, " I have
 " bad news to tell you, but you must support
 " your misfortune with courage. My child,
 " I am ruined. Two thirds of my fortune are
 " just taken on board two vessels, and the dif-
 " honesty

"honesty of a person whom I trusted has deprived me of half the rest. The desire of leaving you a large fortune has ruined me; happily I owe little, and out of the remains of my fortune I shall save my estate of Volny, which is worth twenty thousand livres a-year: on that we shall be able to live. It is a terrible blow, but you are young, and you may rise under it. I have not rendered myself unworthy the confidence of my correspondents; my name will retain perhaps still some credit in Europe; but I am too old to begin anew; and you must repair the misfortunes of your father. I set out in greater difficulties than you will do, and with probity, labour, and my instructions, it is easy for you to go farther in thriving than I have done."

The situation of a traveller at whose feet the thunder has just fallen, is not to be compared to that of Volny. "What, my father, ruined without resource!"—"You, my son, are the only resource left me, and I have no longer any hope but in you. Go, consult yourself, and leave me to take the measures suitable to our misfortune."

The news was soon made public. The house at Paris was let; the equipages sold; a plain coach, a decent lodging, a frugal table, a family of servants suitable to the necessities of

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of a prudent way of living ; every thing proclaimed this reverse of fortune, and it is unnecessary to say that the number of Timantes his friends diminished considerably.

Those of Volny were touched with his accident. " What is the matter then ? " said one of them to him : " they tell me your father " is ruined ! "—" It is too true. "—" What " a folly ! You have your little box then no " longer ? "—" Alas, no. "—" I am very sorry for it, I reckoned to have gone there to " supper to-morrow. " Another accosted him, and said, " Tell me a little how this is ; your " fortune is entirely ruined ? "—" It is at " least reduced to a very small matter. "—" " You have a very silly father of your own ! " " Why the devil did he meddle ? You would " have been ruined yourself well enough without him. " " I am quite distracted, " said a third to him ; " they tell me that you have " sold your fine horses ? "—" Alas, yes. "—" " If I had known it, I would have bought " them of you. What a fellow you are ! " " you never think of your friends. "—" " I " was taken up with more serious affairs. "—" " With your little mistress, was not it ? You " will have her no longer on your own account ; but you will be always good friends : " take comfort, I know she loves you, she " will behave well. " Some of them said to him

him as they went along, "Adieu, Volny;" and all the rest shunned him.

For his mistress, whom he had enriched, she was so afflicted that she had not the courage to see him again. "Spare me," writ she to him: "you know my sensibility; the sight of you would make too grievous an impression on me. I find myself unable to support it." It was then, his soul pierced both by the cold slights of his friends, and the unworthy desertion of his mistress, that Volny for the first time saw the veil fall which he had over his eyes. "Where have I been?" said he: "what have I done? how was I going to spend my life? Ah, what reproaches have I not merited; what wrongs have I not to repair? Let me go and see my sister," added he, for he had not the courage to say, "Let me go and see Angelica."

Lucy was overwhelmed with the news which her father had just told her. "It is not for myself," said she, "I am content; and to be happy far from the world, but little is necessary; but you, my father, but Volny!"—"What would you, daughter? I was not born in the opulence wherein I have seen myself. If my son is prudent, he will still have riches enough; if not, he will have too much." Lucy's grief redoubled on seeing her brother. "I have not the cour-

“rage to console you,” said she to him, “but
 “I go to call to my assistance our wise and a-
 “fectionate Angelica.”—“Oh no, sister, I
 “have not deserved her interesting herself in
 “my sorrow; when I might have done her
 “honour by sacrifices, it was then that I
 “should have rendered myself worthy of her
 “esteem and pity: now that every one aban-
 “dons me, my return, though humiliating to
 “me, has nothing flattering in it for her.”
 While he was speaking thus, Angelica came of
 her own accord, and with the most touching
 air testified to him all her sensibility for his loss.
 “It is a great misfortune for your father,”
 added she, “it is so too for this dear girl,
 “but it is perhaps a happiness for you. It
 “would be cruel to afflict you by reproaches,
 “when we owe you consolations; but you
 “may draw from the loss of your wealth
 “blessings more valuable than that wealth it-
 “self.”—“I abused it, heaven punishes me
 “for it, but punishes me too cruelly in de-
 “priving me of the hope of being her’s whom
 “I love. I was young, and I dare believe
 “that without this desperate lesson, time, love,
 “and reason, would have rendered me less
 “worthy of you.”—“I see you dejected,”
 said she to him; “it is no longer from pre-
 “sumption, it is from despondency that we
 “must preserve you, and what it would have
 been

" been dangerous to confess to you in prospe-
 " rity, you stand in need of knowing in ad-
 " versity. Whether it was not possible for
 " me to think ill of the brother of my friend,
 " or whether it was that you yourself had in-
 " spired me with that prepossession which does
 " not listen to reason, I thought I discerned
 " in you, amidst all the errors and vices of
 " your age, a disposition at bottom naturally
 " good. Happily your past errors have no-
 " thing shamefull in the eyes of the world :
 " the path of honour and virtue is open to
 " you, and it is more easy for you than ever
 " to become such as I wish. As to fortune,
 " the reverse which you have experienced is
 " overwhelming; I shall not make you a pane-
 " gyric upon mediocrity: when we have known
 " ourselves rich, it is humiliating, it is hard to
 " cease to be so ; but the evil is not without re-
 " medy. Conform yourself to your present situ-
 " ation ; emerge out of that indolent softness in
 " which you have been plunged ; let the love of
 " labour take place of the taste for dissipation ;
 " do all that depends on yourself, if you love
 " me, in order to re-establish between us that
 " equality of fortune required in marriages.
 " My father, who loves me, and who would
 " not have me unhappy, will allow me, I
 " hope, the liberty of waiting for you. If in
 " six years your fortune is re-established, or

" on the point of being re-established. all the
 " obstacles will be smoothed ; if with pru-
 " dence, frugality and labour, you have the
 " misfortune not to succeed, I require then of
 " you, in the room of all riches, only to have
 " consideration of your condition ; I am an
 " only daughter, very rich myself ; I will
 " cast myself at my father's feet, and obtain
 " his permission to indemnify a valuable man
 " for the injustice of fortune." Lucy could
 no longer refrain from embracing Angelica ;
 " Ah, how justly art thou named !" said she to
 her. " There is nothing but a heavenly spirit
 " that could be capable of so much virtue."
 Volny on his side, in the tenderness and re-
 spect with which he was seized, applied his
 mouth, as he threw himself down, on the bar
 of the grate which Angelica's hand had touch-
 ed. " Mademoiselle," said he to her, " you
 " render my misfortune dear to me, and I
 " am going to employ my whole life to merit,
 " if it be possible, the favours with which you
 " overwhelm me. Permit me to come often
 " to derive from you the courage, the prudence,
 " and the virtue which I have need of in order
 " to deserve you."

He retired not such as heretofore, vain, and
 full of himself, but humbled, confounded at
 having so little known the value of a heart
 the most noble that heaven had formed. He

enters

enters into his father's closet. "Your fortune is changed," said he to him, "but your son is still more so; and I hope that one day you will bless heaven for the reverse which restores me to my duty, and to myself. Condescend to instruct and to direct me: diligent, laborious, docile, I am going to be the support and consolation of your old-age, and you may dispose of me." The good man transported dissembled his joy, and contented himself with commending such good dispositions. He presented his son to his correspondents, and demanded in his behalf their friendship and confidence. We pity above all unfortunate persons whom we esteem, and each of them touched with the misfortune of this gallant man, made it a point with himself to console him.

Volny, who resumed the name of Timantes, had but few difficulties to encounter in his first operations: his dexterity, which at first was purely his father's, but which soon after became actually his own, made his credit visibly increase. The moments of relaxation which his father obliged him to take, he passed with Angelica, and he felt a sensible pleasure in telling her his progress. Angelica, who attributed to herself in part the wonderful change in her lover, enjoyed her work with the double satisfaction of love and friendship.

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Lucy was in adoration before her, and ceased not to give her thanks for the happiness which she had procured them.

One day that her father came to see her, and testified his satisfaction to her at the consolations which his son gave him, "Do you know," said Lucy to him, "to whom we are indebted for this reformation? to the most beautiful, and most virtuous person breathing, to the only daughter of Alcimon, my companion and friend." She then related to him all that had passed. "You melt me," said the good man, "I must know this charming girl." Angelica came, and received the commendations of Timantes with a modesty which still heightened her beauty. "Sir," said she to him, "I depend on a father; but it is true, that if he has the goodness to allow me to dispose of myself, and that you are satisfied with your son, I shall take a pride in becoming your daughter. My friendship for Lucy inspired me with the first desire of it, my respect for yourself still adds to it, your very misfortunes have only made me interest myself more in every thing that could make you amends for them, and if the conduct of your son is such as you wish and as I desire, whether he be rich or not, the most honourable and the most agreeable use I can make of my fortune,

"tune, is to share it with him." At this discourse the old man was very near letting his secret escape him; but he had the prudence to contain himself. "I did not think, Madam," said he to her, "that it was possible to increase, in the soul of a father, the desire of seeing his son a wise and virtuous man; but you add a new interest to that of paternal love; I don't know what heaven will do with us, but in all the situations of life, and till my last breath, be assured of my gratitude."

"That you should not have confided to me," said he on seeing his son again, "the follies of your youth, I am but little surprised, and I pardon you for it; but why conceal from me a virtuous inclination? why not confess to your father your love for Angelica, the daughter of my old friend?" "Alas," said the young man, "have you not enough of your own misfortunes without afflicting you with my sorrows? and who has revealed to you my secret?"—"Your sister, Angelica herself; I am charmed with her, I am in love with her, and I wish she was my daughter."—"Ah, I wish so too! but how superiour is her fortune to mine!"—"In time you may come near it. Visit this lovely girl often."—"I visit only her, and I have no longer any other ambition in

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in the world, than to be worthy of her and of you."

Timantes felt an inexpressible satisfaction at seeing daily the success of the trial which he had put him to. He had the firmness to let him apply himself for five whole years, without relaxation, to the re-establishing of his fortune, detached from the world, and dividing his life between his counting-house and Angelica's parlour. At length seeing his reformation become habit, and all the old seeds of vice extirpated, he went to visit Alcimon. "My old friend," said he to him, "you have, they tell me, a charming daughter; I come to propose for her an agreeable partner in point of condition, and advantageous in point of fortune." "I am obliged to you," said Alcimon, "but I tell you beforehand that I would have a person of the same condition with myself, and who would take a pride in calling me his father; I have not laboured all my life to give my daughter a husband, who may be ashamed of me." "The person I propose," said Timantes, "is precisely such a one as you like. He is rich, he is honest, he will always respect you."—"What is he?"—"I cannot tell you but at my own house, where I invite you to come and renew, over a bottle, a friendship of forty years. Do me the favour to bring

" Ange-

Angelica there. My daughter, who is her companion in the convent, shall have the honour of accompanying her; you shall both of you see the young man who demands her, and to put you more at your ease, he shall not know himself that I have spoke to you of him." The day appointed, Alcimon and Timantes go and fetch Angelica and Lucy; they arrive, they prepare to sit down at table, they send word to the son, who, busied in his office, expected nothing less than the happiness which was preparing for him. He enters, what is his surprise! Angelica there! Angelica with her father! What was he to think, what to hope from this unforeseen rendezvous? Why had they made a secret of it to him? Every thing seems to proclaim his happiness to him, but his happiness is not probable. In this confusion of thoughts he lost the use of his senses. A sudden giddiness spread a cloud over his eyes; he wanted to speak, his voice failed him, and a low bow alone expressed to the father and the daughter how much he was moved with the honour his father and he received. His sister, who came to throw herself into his arms, gave him time to recover from his confusion. Never was embrace so tender. He thought he held in his bosom

Angelica

Angelica with Lucy, and he could not separate himself from her.

At table, Timantes displayed an alacrity at which all the company were surprised. Alcimon prepossessed with the demand which he had made him, and impatient to see the young man whom he proposed arrive, freely gave himself up to the pleasure of finding himself again with his old friend; he had even the kindness to enter into conversation with the young Timantes. "I see," said he to him, "that you are the comfort of your father. People talk of your application to business and your talents with great commendations, and such is the advantage of your condition, that a dexterous and honest man cannot fail of success."—"Ah, my friend, replied the old Timantes! it requires a great deal of time to make one's fortune, and very little to ruin it! What a pity to have no longer mine to offer you! Instead of proposing to you a stranger as husband to this amiable young lady, I should have solicited that happiness for my son." "I should have preferred him to every body else," said Alcimon.—"Indeed!"—"Ay, indeed. But you know where one is liable to have a numerous family, there should be wherewithal to support it." "If it depends only on that," said Timantes, "the case is not desperate, and
" we

“ we may come to an agreement.” On saying these words he rose from table, and returning the moment after, “ There,” said he, “ see, “ there is my porte-folio : it is yet pretty well “ furnished :” and observing Alcimon’s surprise, know,” added he, “ that my ruin is “ all a fiction. This young man had been “ spoiled by the notion he was born rich : to “ reform him I knew no better method than “ to make him believe that I was ruined. “ This feint has succeeded : he is now in a “ good way ; I am even certain that he has “ no desire to relapse again into the errors of “ his youth, and it is time to trust to him. “ Yes, my son, I have all the wealth I had, “ augmented by five years savings and the “ fruit of your labour. It is for him, therefore,” said he to his friend, “ that I demand “ Angelica of you, and if there be occasion “ for any new motive to engage you to grant “ her to me, I will confess to you that he has “ seen her at the convent, that he has conceived for her the most tender love, and that “ this love has done more than ill-fortune itself towards attaching him to his duties.” While Timantes did but sound the disposition of Angelica’s father, she herself, her friend, and her lover had felt only the emotion and anxiety of hope and fear ; but at sight of the porte-folio, at the news that Timantes his ruin

was

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was but a feint, at the demand which he made himself of Angelica's hand for his son, Lucy all wild and beside herself flew into the arms of her father; the young Timantes still more confused fell at Alcimon's knees; and Angelica, her countenance overspread with paleness, had not the power to lift up her eyes. Alcimon raised the young man with his embraces, and turning towards the old Timantes, "My friend," said he to him, "when we would contrive an agreeable surprise, we must take instruction from you. Come, you are a good father, and your son deserves to be happy."

2 AP 57

END of VOLUME SECOND.